REFLECTIONS

ON THE

RISE AND FALL

OF THE

ANCIENT REPUBLICKS.

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ON THE

RISE AND FALL

OF THE

ANCIENT REPUBLICKS,

ADAPTED TO THE

PRESENT STATE

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

Οὐ τί τῷδε, ἢ τῷδε δόξει, λογιζόμενος·
Ἀλλὰ τί πέπραχται λέγων.

Lucian. Hiſtor. Scribend.

By EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGU, Eſq.

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CONTENTS.

Page

PREFACE - - - - - - - 1
Introduction - - - - - - - 9

CHAP.

I. Of the REPUBLICK of SPARTA 15
II. Of ATHENS 74
III. Of THEBES 157
IV. Of CARTHAGE 176
V. Of ROME 221
VI. Of the real Cauſe of the rapid Declenſion of the ROMAN REPUBLICK 293
VII. CARTHAGINIANS and ROMANS compared 317
VIII. Of Revolutions in mixed Governments 364
IX. Of the BRITISH Conſtitution 377

PREFACE.

PLUTARCH takes notice of a very remarkable law of Solon's [1], "which "declared every man infamous, who, in "any ſedition or civil diſſention in the ſtate, "ſhould continue neuter, and refuſe to ſide "with either party." Aulus Gellius [2], who gives a more circumſtantial detail of this uncommon law, affirms the penalty to be "no leſs "than confiſcation of all the effects, and ba-"niſhment of the delinquent." Cicero mentions the ſame law to his friend [3] Atticus, and even makes the puniſhment capital, though he reſolves at the ſame time not to conform to it under his preſent circumſtances, unleſs his friend ſhould adviſe him to the contrary.

Which of theſe relators has given us the real penalty annexed to this law by Solon,

[1] Plut. in Vit. Solon. ἄτιμον.
[2] A. Gellii Noct. Attic. lib. 2. c. 12.
[3] Epiſt. ad Attic. lib. 10. epiſt. 1.

is ſcarce worth our enquiry. But I cannot help obſerving, that ſtrange as this law may appear at firſt ſight, yet if we reflect upon the reaſons of it, as they are aſſigned by Plutarch and A. Gellius, it will not appear unworthy of that great legiſlator.

The opinion of Plutarch is, "That Solon intended no citizen, as ſoon as ever he had provided for the ſecurity of his own private affairs, ſhould be ſo unfeeling with reſpect to the public welfare as [1] to affect a brutal inſenſibility, and not ſympathize with the diſtreſs and calamities of his country: but that he ſhould immediately join the honeſter and juſter party; and rather riſque his all in defence of the ſide he had eſpouſed, than keep aloof from danger till he ſaw which party proved the ſtronger."

The reaſon given by A. Gellius is more ſtriking, and leſs liable to objections than that of Plutarch. "If (ſays that writer) all the good men in any ſtate, when they find themſelves too weak to ſtem the torrent of a furious divided populace, and unable to ſuppreſs a ſedition at its firſt breaking out, ſhould immediately divide, and throw themſelves into the oppoſite ſides, the event in ſuch a

[1] Μὴ συναλγεῖν, μηδὲ συννοσεῖν.

caſe

caſe would be, that each party, which they had differently eſpouſed, would naturally begin to cool, and put themſelves under their direction, as perſons of the greateſt weight and authority: thus it would be greatly in the power of ſuch men ſo circumſtanced, to reconcile all differences, and reſtore peace and union, while they mutually reſtrained and moderated the fury of their own party, and convinced the oppoſite ſide, that they ſincerely wiſhed and laboured for their ſafety, not for their deſtruction.

What effect this law had in the Athenian ſtate is no where mentioned. However, as it is plainly founded upon that relation which every member bears to the body politick, and that intereſt which every individual is ſuppoſed to have in the good of the whole community; it is ſtill, though not in expreſs terms, yet virtually received in every free country. For thoſe who continue neuter in any civil diſſention, under the denomination of moderate men, who keep aloof and wait quietly in order to follow the fortune of the prevailing ſide, are generally ſtigmatized with the opprobrious name of *Time-ſervers*, and conſequently neither eſteemed, nor truſted by either party.

As our own country is bleſſed with the greateſt ſhare of liberty, ſo is it more ſubject to civil diſſentions than any other nation in Europe. Every man is a politician, and warmly attached to his reſpective party; and this law of Solon's ſeems to take place as ſtrongly in Britain, as ever it did in the moſt factious times at Athens. Freedom of thought, or the liberty of the mind, ariſes naturally from the very eſſence of our conſtitution; and the liberty of the preſs, that peculiar privilege of the Britiſh ſubject, gives every man a continual opportunity of laying his ſentiments before the Public. Would our political writers purſue the ſalutary intention of Solon, as delivered to us by A. Gellius in his explication of that extraordinary law, they might contribute greatly to the eſtabliſhment of that harmony and union, which can alone preſerve and perpetuate the duration of our conſtitution. But the oppoſite views and intereſts of parties make the altercation endleſs; and the victory over an antagoniſt is generally the aim, whilſt the inveſtigation of truth only, ought ever to be the real end propoſed in all controverſial inquiries. The points which have lately exerciſed ſo many pens, turn upon the preſent expediency, or abſolute inſignificancy, of a *Militia*; or, what principles conduce moſt to the power, the happineſs, and the duration

duration of a free people. The diſpute has been carried on, not only with warmth, but even with virulence. The chicane of ſophiſtry has been employed, whilſt indecent perſonal reflections, and the unfair charge of diſaffection, have been too often made uſe of to ſupply the defect of argument, and to prejudice the reader, where they deſpaired of confuting the writer. Hiſtorical facts have been either miſrepreſented, or aſcribed to wrong principles; the hiſtory of ancient nations has been quoted in general terms, without marking the different periods diſtinguiſhed by ſome memorable change in the manners or conſtitution of the ſame people, which will ever make a wide difference in the application.

Anxious after truth, and unſatisfied with ſo many bold aſſertions deſtitute of all proof but the writer's word, which I daily met with, I determined coolly and impartially to examine the evidence ariſing from ancient hiſtory, which both ſides ſo frequently appealed to: for bare ſpeculative reaſoning is no more concluſive in political inquiries than in phyſical. Facts and experience alone muſt decide: and political facts and experience muſt alone be learned from hiſtory. Determined therefore to judge for myſelf, I carefully read over the hiſtories of the moſt

celebrated republics of antiquity in their original languages, unbiaſſed either by comments or tranſlations; a part of hiſtory of all others the moſt inſtructive, and moſt intereſting to an Engliſhman.

As inſtruction was the ſole end of my inquiries, I here venture to offer the reſult of them to the candor of the Public, ſince my only motive for writing was a moſt ardent concern for the welfare of my country. The deſign therefore of theſe papers is, to warn my countrymen, by the example of others, of the fatal conſequences which muſt inevitably attend our inteſtine diviſions at this critical juncture; and to inculcate the neceſſity of that national union, upon which the ſtrength, the ſecurity, and the duration of a free ſtate muſt eternally depend. Happy, if my weak endeavours could in the leaſt contribute to an end ſo ſalutary, ſo truly deſirable!

In the numerous quotations from the Greek and Latin hiſtorians, which are unavoidable in a treatiſe of this nature, I have endeavoured to give the genuine ſenſe and meaning of the author, to the beſt of my abilities. But as every reader has an equal right of judging for himſelf, I have ſubjoined in the margin, the original words of the author,

author, with the book, page, name, and date of the reſpective edition I made uſe of, for the eaſe as well as the ſatisfaction of the candid and judicious: for that vague and careleſs manner, which ſome writers affect, of quoting an author by name only, without ſpecifying the particular paſſage referred to in evidence, is neither uſeful, nor ſatisfactory to the generality of readers; whilſt the unfair method, too often practiſed, of quoting disjointed ſcraps, or unconnected ſentences, is apt to raiſe ſtrong ſuſpicions, that the real ſentiments and intention of the author are kept out of ſight, and that the writer is endeavouring to palm falſe evidence upon his readers.

I muſt take the liberty of offering another reaſon, which, I confeſs, was of more weight with me, becauſe more perſonally intereſting. As the Britiſh ſtate and the ancient free Republicks were founded upon the ſame principles, and their policy and conſtitution nearly ſimilar, ſo, as like cauſes will ever produce like effects, it is impoſſible not to perceive an equal reſemblance between their and our manners, as they and we equally deviated from thoſe firſt principles. Unhappily, the reſemblance between the manners of our own times, and the manners of thoſe republicks in their moſt degenerate periods,

is, in many reſpects, ſo ſtriking, that unleſs the words in the original were produced as vouchers, any well-meaning reader, unacquainted with thoſe hiſtorians, would be apt to treat the deſcriptions of thoſe periods, which he may frequently meet with, as licentious, undiſtinguiſhing ſatire upon the preſent age.

The behaviour of ſome of our political writers makes an apology of this nature in ſome meaſure neceſſary; on the one hand, that I may avoid the imputation of pedantry, or being thought fond of an idle oſtentatious parade of learning; on the other, *leſt a work calculated to promote domeſtick peace and union, ſhould be ſtrained, by the perverſeneſs of party conſtruction, into an inflammatory libel.*

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

I Am not at all ſurpriſed at thoſe encomiums which the philoſophers and poets ſo laviſhly beſtow upon the pleaſures of a country retirement. The profuſion of varying beauties, which attend the returning ſeaſons, furniſhes out new and inexhauſtible ſubjects for the entertainment of the ſtudious and contemplative. Even winter carries charms for the philoſophic eye, and equally ſpeaks the ſtupendous power of the great Author of nature. To ſearch out and adore the Creator through his works, is our primary duty, and claims the firſt place in every rational mind. To promote the public good of the community of which we are born members, in proportion to our ſituation and abilities, is our ſecondary duty as men and citizens. I judged therefore a cloſe attention to the ſtudy of Hiſtory the moſt uſeful way of employing that time which my country-receſs afforded, as it would enable me

me to fulfil this obligation: and upon this principle I take the liberty of offering theſe papers as my mite towards the public good.

In the courſe of theſe reſearches nothing gave me ſo much pleaſure as the ſtudy of ancient hiſtory: becauſe it made me ſo truly ſenſible of the ineſtimable value of our own conſtitution, when I obſerved the very different maxims and conduct, and the ſtrong contraſt between the founders of deſpotick monarchies, and the legiſlators of the free ſtates of antiquity. In the former, that abſurd and impious doctrine of millions created for the ſole uſe and pleaſure of one individual, ſeems to have been the firſt poſition in their politicks, and the general rule of their conduct. The latter fixed the baſis of their reſpective ſtates upon this juſt and benevolent plan, "That the ſafety and happineſs "of the whole community was the only end "of all government." The former treated mankind as brutes, and lorded it over them by force. The latter received them as their fellow-creatures, and governed them by reaſon; hence whilſt we deteſt the former as the enemies and deſtroyers, we cannot help admiring and revering the latter, as the lovers and benefactors of mankind.

The hiſtories which I conſidered with the greateſt attention, gave me the higheſt entertain-

tertainment, and affected me moſt, were thoſe of the free ſtates of Greece, Carthage, and Rome. I ſaw with admiration the profound wiſdom and ſagacity, the unwearied labour and diſintereſted ſpirit of thoſe amiable and generous men, who contributed moſt towards forming thoſe ſtates, and ſettling them upon the firmeſt foundations. I traced with pleaſure their gradual progreſs towards that height of power, to which in proceſs of time they arrived; and I marked the various ſteps and degrees by which they again declined, and at laſt ſunk gradually into their final diſſolution, not without a juſt mixture of ſorrow and indignation.

It would be a labour of more curioſity, than of real uſe at this time, to give a long detail of the original formation of thoſe ſtates, and the wiſe laws and inſtitutions by which they were raiſed to that envied degree of perfection; yet a conciſe account of the primitive conſtitution of each ſtate may be ſo far neceſſary, as it will render the deviations from that conſtitution more intelligible, and more fully illuſtrate the cauſes of their final ſubverſion. But to point out and expoſe the principal cauſes, which contributed gradually to weaken, and at length demoliſh and level with the ground, thoſe beautiful fabricks raiſed by the public virtue, and cemented by the blood of ſo many illu-

illuſtrious patriots, will, in my opinion, be more intereſting, and more inſtructive.

When I conſider the conſtitution of our own country, I cannot but think it the beſt calculated for promoting the happineſs, and preſerving the lives, liberty, and property of mankind, of any yet recorded in prophane hiſtory. I am perſuaded too, that our wiſe anceſtors, who firſt formed it, adopted whatever they judged moſt excellent and valuable in thoſe ſtates when in their greateſt perfection; and did all that human wiſdom could do for rendering it durable, and tranſmitting it pure and entire to future generations. But as all things under the ſun are ſubject to change, and children are too apt to forget and degenerate from the virtues of their fathers, there ſeems great reaſon to fear, that what has happened to thoſe free ſtates may at length prove the melancholy fate of our own country; eſpecially when we reflect, that the ſame cauſes, which contributed to their ruin, operate at this time ſo very ſtrongly amongſt us. As I thought therefore that it might be of ſome uſe to my country at this dangerous criſis, I have ſelected the intereſting examples of thoſe once free and powerful nations, who by totally deviating from thoſe principles upon which they were originally founded, loſt firſt their liberty, and at laſt their very exiſtence, ſo far

as

as to leave no other veſtiges remaining of them as a people, but what are to be found in the records of hiſtory.

It is an undoubted truth, that our own conſtitution has at different times ſuffered very ſevere ſhocks, and been reduced more than once to the very point of ruin: but becauſe it has hitherto providentially eſcaped, we are not to flatter ourſelves that opportunities of recovery will always offer. To me therefore the method of proof drawn from example, ſeemed more ſtriking, as well as more level to every capacity, than all ſpeculative reaſoning: for as the ſame cauſes will, by the ſtated laws of ſublunary affairs, ſooner or later invariably produce the ſame effects, ſo whenever we ſee the ſame maxims of government prevail, the ſame meaſures purſued, and the ſame coincidences of circumſtances happen in our own country, which brought on, and attended the ſubverſion of thoſe ſtates, we may plainly read our own fate in their cataſtrophe, unleſs we apply ſpeedy and effectual remedies, before our caſe is paſt recovery. It is the beſt way to learn wiſdom in time from the fate of others; and if examples will not inſtruct and make us wiſer, I confeſs myſelf utterly at a loſs to know what will.

In my reflections, which naturally aroſe in the courſe of theſe reſearches, truth and im-

impartiality have been my only guides. I have endeavoured to ſhew the principal cauſes of that degeneracy of manners, which reduced thoſe once brave and free people into the moſt abject ſlavery. I have marked the alarming progreſs which the ſame evils have already made, and ſtill continue to make amongſt us, with that honeſt freedom which is the birthright of every Engliſhman. My ſole aim is to excite thoſe who have the welfare of their country at heart, to unite their endeavours in oppoſing the fatal tendency of thoſe evils, whilſt they are within the power of remedy. With this view, and this only, I have marked out the remote as well as immediate cauſes of the ruin of thoſe ſtates, as ſo many beacons warning us to avoid the ſame rocks upon which they ſtruck, and at laſt ſuffered ſhipwreck.

Truth will ever be unpalatable to thoſe who are determined not to relinquiſh error, but can never give offence to the honeſt and well-meaning amongſt my countrymen. For the plain-dealing remonſtrances of a friend differ as widely from the rancour of an enemy, as the friendly probe of the phyſician from the dagger of the aſſaſſin.

REFLECTIONS
ON THE
RISE and FALL
OF THE
ANCIENT REPUBLICKS.

CHAP. I.

Of the REPUBLICK of SPARTA.

ALL the free ſtates of Greece were at firſt monarchial[1], and ſeem to owe their liberty rather to the injudicious oppreſſions of their reſpective Kings, than to any natural propenſity in the people to alter their form of Government. But as they had ſmarted ſo ſeverely under an exceſs of power lodged in the hands of one man, they were too apt to run into the other extreme, Democracy; a ſtate of government the moſt ſubject of all others to diſunion and faction.

Of all the Grecian ſtates, that of Sparta ſeems to have been the moſt unhappy, before their government was new-modelled by Lycurgus. The authority of their Kings and their laws (as Plutarch informs us) were

[1] Dion. Halicarn. p. 248. edit. Rob. Steph. 1546.

alike

alike trampled upon and deſpiſed. Nothing could reſtrain the inſolence of the headſtrong encroaching populace; and the whole government ſunk into Anarchy and confuſion. From this deplorable ſituation the wiſdom and virtue of one great man raiſed his country to that height of power, which was the envy and the terror of her neighbours. A convincing proof how far the influence of one great and good man will operate towards reforming the moſt bold licentious people, when he has once thoroughly acquired their eſteem and confidence! Upon this principle Lycurgus founded his plan of totally altering and new-moulding the conſtitution of his country. A deſign, all circumſtances conſidered, the moſt daring, and the moſt happily executed, of any yet immortaliſed in hiſtory [1].

Lycurgus ſucceeded to the moiety of the crown of Sparta at the death of his elder brother; but his brother's widow declaring herſelf with child, and that child proving to be a ſon, he immediately reſigned the regal dignity to the new-born infant, and governed as protector and guardian of the young prince during his minority. The generous and diſintereſted behaviour of Lycurgus upon this occaſion endered him greatly to the people; who had already experienced

[1] Plutarch relates this affair greatly to the honour of Lycurgus in the beginning of his Life.

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the happy effect of his wife and equitable adminiſtration. But to avoid the malice of the Queen-mother and her faction, who accuſed him of deſigns upon the crown, he prudently quitted both the government and his country. In his travels during this voluntary exile, he drew up and thoroughly digeſted his great ſcheme of reformation. He viſited all thoſe ſtates which at that time were moſt eminent for the wiſdom of their laws, or the form of their conſtitution. He carefully obſerved all the different inſtitutions, and the good or bad effects which they reſpectively produced on the manners of each people. He took care to avoid what he judged to be defects; but ſelected whatever he found calculated to promote the happineſs of a people; and with theſe materials he formed his ſo much celebrated plan of legiſlation, which he very ſoon had an opportunity of reducing to practice. For the Spartans, thoroughly ſenſible of the difference between the adminiſtration of Lycurgus and that of their Kings, not only earneſtly wiſhed for his preſence, but ſent repeated deputations to intreat him to return, and free them from thoſe numerous diſorders under which their country at that time laboured. As the requeſt of the people was unanimous, and the Kings no ways oppoſed his return, he judged it the critical time for

the execution of his ſcheme. For he found affairs at home in the diſtracted ſituation they had been repreſented, and the whole body of the people in a diſpoſition proper for his purpoſe.

Lycurgus began his reform with a change in the conſtitution, which at that time conſiſted of a confuſed medley of hereditary monarchy divided between two families, and a diſorderly Democracy, utterly deſtitute of the balance of a third intermediate power, a circumſtance ſo eſſential to the duration of all mixed governments. To remedy this evil, he eſtabliſhed a ſenate with ſuch a degree of power, as might fix them the inexpugnable barrier of the conſtitution againſt the encroachments either of Kings or people. The Crown of Sparta had been long divided between two families deſcended originally from the ſame anceſtor, who jointly enjoyed the ſucceſſion. But though Lycurgus was ſenſible that all the miſchiefs which had happened to the ſtate, aroſe from this abſurd diviſion of the regal power, yet he made no alteration as to the ſucceſſion of the two families. Any innovation in ſo nice a point might have proved an endleſs ſource of civil commotions, from the pretenſions of that line which ſhould happen to be excluded. He therefore left them the title

title and the inſignia of royalty, but limited their authority, which he confined to the buſineſs of war and religion. To the people he gave the privilege of electing the ſenators, and giving their ſanction to thoſe laws which the Kings and ſenate ſhould approve.

When Lycurgus had regulated the government, he undertook a taſk more arduous than any of the fabled labours of Hercules. This was to new-mould his countrymen, by extirpating all the deſtructive paſſions, and raiſing them above every weakneſs and infirmity of human nature. A ſcheme which all the great Philoſophers had taught in theory, but none except Lycurgus was ever able to reduce to practice.

As he found the two extremes, of great wealth and great indigence, were the ſource of infinite miſchiefs in a free ſtate, he divided the lands of the whole territory into equal lots, proportioned to the number of the inhabitants. He appointed publick tables, at which he enjoined all the citizens to eat together without diſtinction; and he ſubjected every man, even the Kings themſelves, to a [1] fine, if they ſhould violate this law by

[1] Ἄγιδος γὰν τὸ βασιλέως
ἐζημίωσαν αὐτόν.

Plut. vita Lycur. pag. 46. lit. c. Edit. Xiglandri.

eating at their own houſes. Their diet was plain, ſimple, and regulated by the law, and diſtributed amongſt the gueſts in equal portions. Every member was obliged monthly to contribute his quota for the proviſion of his reſpective table. The converſation allowed at theſe publick repaſts turned wholly upon ſuch ſubjects as tended moſt to improve the minds of the younger ſort in the principles of wiſdom and virtue. Hence, as Xenophon obſerves, they were ſchools not only for temperance and ſobriety, but alſo for inſtruction. Thus Lycurgus introduced a perfect equality amongſt his countrymen. The higheſt and the loweſt fared alike as to diet, were all lodged and cloathed alike, without the leaſt variation either in faſhion or materials.

When by theſe means he had exterminated every ſpecies of luxury, he next removed all temptation to the acquiſition of wealth, that fatal ſource of the innumerable evils which prevailed in every other country. He effected this with his uſual policy, by forbidding the currency of gold and ſilver money, and ſubſtituting an iron coinage of great weight and little value, which continued the only current coin through the whole Spartan dominions for ſeveral ages.

To bar up the entrance of Wealth, and guard his citizens againſt the contagion of Corruption, he abſolutely prohibited navigation and commerce, though his country contained a large extent of ſea-coaſt, furniſhed with excellent harbours. He allowed as little intercourſe as poſſible with foreigners, nor ſuffered any of his countrymen to viſit the neighbouring ſtates, unleſs when the publick buſineſs required it, leſt they ſhould be infected with their vices. Agriculture, and ſuch mechanick trades as were abſolutely neceſſary for their ſubſiſtence, he confined to their ſlaves the Ilotes; but he baniſhed all thoſe arts which tended either to debaſe the mind, or enervate the body. Muſick he encouraged, and poetry he admitted, but both ſubject to the inſpection of the magiſtrates [1]. Thus, by the equal partition of the lands, and the abolition of gold and ſilver money, he at once preſerved his country from luxury, avarice, and all thoſe evils which ariſe from an irregular indulgence of the paſſions, as well as all contentions about property, with their conſequence, vexatious law-ſuits.

To inſure the obſervance of his laws to the lateſt poſterity, he next formed proper

[1] Lycurgus was the firſt who collected the entire works of Homer; which he brought into Greece out of Aſia-Minor.

regulations for the education of their children, which he eſteemed one of the greateſt duties of a legiſlator. His grand maxim was, "That children were the property of the "ſtate, to whom alone their education was "to be intruſted." In their firſt infancy, the nurſes were inſtructed to indulge them neither in their diet, nor in thoſe little froward humours which are ſo peculiar to that age; to inure them to bear cold and faſting; to conquer their firſt fears by accuſtoming them to ſolitude and darkneſs; and to prepare them for that ſtricter ſtate of diſcipline, to which they were ſoon to be initiated.

When arrived at the age of ſeven years, they were taken from the nurſes, and placed in their proper claſſes. The diet and cloathing of all were the ſame, juſt ſufficient to ſupport nature, and defend them from the inclemency of the ſeaſons; and they all lodged alike in the ſame dormitory on beds of reeds, to which for the ſake of warmth they were allowed in winter to add the down of thiſtles. Their ſports and exerciſes were ſuch as contributed to render their limbs ſupple, and their bodies compact and firm. They were accuſtomed to run up the ſteepeſt rocks barefoot; and ſwimming, dancing, hunting, boxing, and wreſtling, were their conſtant diverſions. Lycurgus was equally ſolicitous in training up the youth to a habit

of

of paſſive courage as well as active. They were taught to deſpiſe pain no leſs than danger, and to bear the ſevereſt ſcourgings with the moſt invincible conſtancy and reſolution, For to flinch under the ſtrokes, or to exhibit the leaſt ſign of any ſenſe of pain, was deemed highly infamous.

Nor were the minds of the Spartan youth cultivated with leſs care. Their learning, as Plutarch informs us, was ſufficient for their occaſions, for Lycurgus admitted nothing but what was truly uſeful. They carefully inſtilled into their tender minds the great duties of religion, and the ſacred indiſpenſable obligation of an oath, and trained them up in the beſt of ſciences, the principles of wiſdom and virtue. The love of their Country ſeemed to be almoſt innate; and this leading maxim, " That every Spartan was " the property of his country, and had no " right over himſelf," was by the force of education incorporated into their very nature.

When they arrived to manhood they were inrolled in their militia, and allowed to be preſent in their publick aſſemblies: Privileges which only ſubjected them to a different diſcipline. For the employments and way of living of the citizens of Sparta were fixed, and ſettled by as ſtrict regulations as in an army upon actual ſervice. When

they took the field, indeed, the rigour of their diſcipline with reſpect to diet and the ornament of their perſons was much ſoftened, ſo that the Spartans were the only people in the univerſe, to whom the toils of war afforded eaſe and relaxation. In fact, Lycurgus's plan of civil government was evidently deſigned to preſerve his country free and independent, and to form the minds of his citizens for the enjoyment of that rational and manly happineſs which can find no place in a breaſt enſlaved by the pleaſures of the ſenſes, or ruffled by the paſſions; and the [1] military regulations which he eſtabliſhed, were as plainly calculated for the protection of his country from the encroachments of her ambitious neighbours. For he left no alternative to his people but death or victory; and he laid them under a neceſſity of obſerving thoſe regulations, by ſubſtituting the valour of the inhabitants in the place of walls and fortifications for the defence of their city.

If we reflect that human nature is at all times and in all places the ſame, it ſeems to the laſt degree aſtoniſhing, how Lycurgus could be able to introduce ſuch a ſelf-denying plan of diſcipline amongſt a diſorderly licentious people; A ſcheme, which not only

[1] Plutarch has taken no notice of them. But Xenophon has fully explained them in his treatiſe on the Spartan republick, p. 542, & ſeq.

levelled

levelled at once all diſtinction, as to property, between the richeſt and the pooreſt individual, but compelled the greateſt perſons in the ſtate to ſubmit to a regimen which allowed only the bare neceſſaries of life, excluding every thing which in the opinion of mankind ſeems eſſential to its comforts and enjoyments. I obſerved before, that he had ſecured the eſteem and confidence of his countrymen; and there was, beſides, at that time a very lucky concurrence of circumſtances in his favour. The two Kings were men of little ſpirit, and leſs abilities, and the people were glad to exchange their diſorderly ſtate for any ſettled form of government. By his eſtabliſhment of a Senate, conſiſting of thirty perſons who held their ſeats for life, and to whom he committed the ſupreme power in civil affairs, he brought the principal nobility into his ſcheme, as they naturally expected a ſhare in a government which they plainly ſaw inclined ſo much to an Ariſtocracy. Even the two Kings very readily accepted ſeats in his ſenate, to ſecure ſome degree of authority. He awed the people into obedience by the ſanction he procured for his ſcheme from the oracle at Delphos, whoſe deciſions were, at that time, revered by all Greece as divine and infallible. But the greateſt difficulty he had to encounter, was, to procure the

the equal partition of the lands. The very firſt propoſal met with ſo violent an oppoſition from the men of fortune, that a fray enſued, in which Lycurgus loſt one of his eyes. But the people, ſtruck with the ſight of the blood of this admired legiſlator, ſeized the offender, one Alcander, a young man of a hot, but not diſingenuous diſpoſition, and gave him up to Lycurgus to be puniſhed, at diſcretion. But the humane and generous behaviour of Lycurgus quickly made a convert of Alcander, and wrought ſuch a change, that from an enemy he became his greateſt admirer and advocate with the people.

Plutarch and the reſt of the Greek hiſtorians leave us greatly in the dark as to the means by which Lycurgus was able to make ſo bitter a pill, as the diviſion of property, go down with the wealthy part of his countrymen. They tell us indeed, that he carried his point by the gentle method of reaſoning and perſuaſion, joined to that religious awe which the divine ſanction of the oracle impreſſed ſo deeply on the minds of the citizens. But the cauſe, in my opinion, does not ſeem equal to the effect. For the furious oppoſition which the rich made to the very firſt motion for ſuch a diſtribution of property, evinces plainly, that they looked upon the reſponſes of the oracle as mere prieſt-craft, and treated it as the *eſprits-forts* have done religion

gion in modern times; I mean, as a ſtate-engine fit only to be played off upon the common people. It ſeems moſt probable, in my opinion, that as he effected the change in the conſtitution by the diſtribution of the ſupreme power amongſt the principal perſons, when he formed his ſenate; ſo the equal partition of property was the bait thrown out to bring over the body of the people intirely to his intereſt. I ſhould rather think that he compelled the rich to ſubmit to ſo grating a meaſure, by the aſſiſtance of the poorer citizens, who were vaſtly the majority.

As ſoon as Lycurgus had thoroughly ſettled his new policy, and by his care and aſſiduity imprinted his laws ſo deeply in the minds and manners of his countrymen, that he judged the conſtitution able to ſupport itſelf, and ſtand upon its own bottom; his laſt ſcheme was, to fix and perpetuate its duration down to lateſt poſterity, as far as human prudence and human means could effect it. To bring his ſcheme to bear, he had again recourſe to the ſame pious artifice which had ſucceeded ſo well in the beginning. He told the people in a general aſſembly, that he could not poſſibly put the finiſhing ſtroke to his new eſtabliſhment, which was the moſt eſſential point, till he had again conſulted the oracle. As they all expreſſed the greateſt eagerneſs for his undertaking the journey, he laid

laid hold of ſo fair an opportunity to bind the Kings, ſenate, and people, by the moſt ſolemn oaths, to the ſtrict obſervance of his new form of government, and not to attempt the leaſt alteration in any one particular till his return from Delphos. He had now completed the great deſign which he had long in view, and bid an eternal adieu to his country. The queſtion he put to the oracle was, "Whether the laws he had already eſtabliſhed, were rightly formed to make and preſerve his countrymen virtuous and happy?" The anſwer he received was juſt as favourable as he deſired. It was, "That his laws were excellently well calculated for that purpoſe; and that Sparta ſhould continue to be the moſt renowned city in the world, as long as her citizens perſiſted in the obſervance of the laws of Lycurgus." He tranſmitted both the queſtion and the anſwer home to Sparta in writing, and devoted the remainder of his life to voluntary baniſhment. The accounts in hiſtory of the end of this great man are very uncertain. Plutarch affirms, that as his reſolution was never to releaſe his countrymen from the obligation of the oath he had laid them under, he put a voluntary end to his life at Delphos by faſting. Plutarch extols the death of Lycurgus in very pompous terms, as a moſt unexampled inſtance of heroic patriotiſm, ſince he bequeathed, as he

terms

terms it, his death to his country, as the perpetual guardian to that happineſs, which he had procured for them during his life-time. Yet the ſame hiſtorian acknowledges another tradition, that Lycurgus ended his days in the iſland of Crete, and deſired, as his laſt requeſt, that his body ſhould be burnt, and his aſhes thrown into the ſea [1]; leſt, if his remains ſhould at any time be carried back to Sparta, his countrymen might look upon themſelves as releaſed from their oath as much as if he had returned alive, and be induced to alter his form of government. I own, I prefer this latter account, as more agreeable to the genius and policy of that wiſe and truly diſintereſted legiſlator,

The Spartans, as Plutarch aſſerts, held the firſt rank in Greece for diſcipline and reputation full five hundred years, by ſtrictly adhering to the laws of Lycurgus; which not one of their Kings ever infringed for fourteen ſucceſſions quite down to the reign of the firſt Agis. For he will not allow the creation of thoſe magiſtrates called the Ephori to be any innovation in the conſtitution, ſince he affirms it to have been, "[2] not a relaxation, but an extenſion, of the civil polity." But notwithſtanding the gloſs thrown over the inſtitution of the Ephori by this nice diſtinction

[1] Plut. Vit. Lycurg. ad finem.

[2] Plut. ibid. p. 58. A. Ἡ γὰρ τῶν Ἐφόρων κατάτασις, &c.

of

of Plutarch's, it certainly induced as fatal a change into the Spartan conſtitution, as the Tribuneſhip of the people, which was formed upon that model, did afterwards into the Roman. For inſtead of enlarging and ſtrengthening the ariſtocratical power, as Plutarch aſſerts, they gradually uſurped the whole government, and formed themſelves into a moſt tyrannical Oligarchy.

The Ephori (a Greek word ſignifying inſpectors or overſeers) were five in number, and elected annually by the people out of their own body. The exact time of the origin of this inſtitution, and of the authority annexed to their office, is quite uncertain. Herodotus aſcribes it to Lycurgus; Xenophon to Lycurgus jointly with the principal citizens of Sparta. Ariſtotle and Plutarch fix it under the reign of Theopompus and Polydorus, and attribute the inſtitution expreſly to the former of thoſe princes, about 130 years after the death of Lycurgus. I cannot but ſubſcribe to this opinion as the moſt probable, becauſe the firſt political conteſt we meet with at Sparta happened under the reign of thoſe princes, when the people endeavoured to extend their privileges beyond the limits preſcribed by Lycurgus. But as the joint oppoſition of the Kings and ſenate was eqally warm, the creation of this magiſtracy out of the body of the people, ſeems to have

have been the ſtep taken at that time to compromiſe the affair, and reſtore the publick tranquillity: A meaſure which the Roman ſenate copied afterwards, in the erection of the Tribuneſhip, when their people mutinied, and made that memorable ſeceſſion to the *mons ſacer*. I am confirmed in this opinion by the relation which Ariſtotle givos us [1] of a remarkable diſpute between Theopompus and his wife upon that occaſion. The Queen, much diſſatisfied with the inſtitution of the Ephori, reproached her huſband greatly for ſubmitting to ſuch a diminution of the regal authority, and aſked him if he was not aſhamed to tranſmit the crown to his poſterity ſo much weaker and worſe circumſtanced, than he received it from his father. His anſwer, which is recorded amongſt the laconic *bons mots*, was, "[2] No, for I tranſmit it "more laſting." But the event ſhewed that the lady was a better politician, as well as truer prophet, than her huſband. Indeed the nature of their office, the circumſtances of their election, and the authority they aſſumed, are convincing proofs that their office was firſt extorted, and their power afterwards gradually extended, by the violence of the people, irritated too probably by the oppreſ-

[1] De Rebuſpubl. cap. 11. p. 154. vol. 2. Edit. Baſil. 1550.

[2] Οὐ δῆτα φάναι παραδ ὦμι γὰρ πολυχρονιωτέραν.

ſive

ſive behaviour of the Kings and ſenate. For whether their power extended no farther than to decide, when the two Kings differed in opinion, and to over-rule in favour of him whoſe ſentiments ſhould be moſt conducive to the publick intereſt, as we are told by Plutarch in the life of Agis; or whether they were at firſt only ſelect friends, whom the Kings appointed as deputies in their abſence, when they were both compelled to take the field together in their long wars with the Meſſenians, as the ſame author tells us by the mouth of his hero Cleomenes, is a point, which hiſtory does not afford us light enough to determine. This however is certain, from the concurrent voice of all the antient hiſtorians, that at laſt they not only ſeized upon every branch of the adminiſtration, but aſſumed the power of impriſoning, depoſing, and even putting their Kings to death by their own authority. The Kings too, in return, ſometimes bribed, ſometimes depoſed or murdered the Ephori, and employed their whole intereſt to procure ſuch perſons to be elected, as they judged would be moſt tractable. I look therefore upon the creation of the Ephori as a breach in the Spartan conſtitution, which proved the firſt inlet to faction and corruption. For that theſe evils took riſe from the inſtitution of the Ephori, is evident from

from the teſtimony of Ariſtotle, " [1] who thought it extremely impolitick to elect magiſtrates, veſted with the ſupreme power in the ſtate, out of the body of the people; becauſe it often happened, that men extremely indigent were raiſed in this manner to the helm, whom their very poverty tempted to become venal. For the Ephori, as he affirms, had not only been frequently guilty of bribery before his time, but, even at the very time he wrote, ſome of thoſe magiſtrates, corrupted by money, uſed their utmoſt endeavours, at the publick repaſts, to accompliſh the deſtruction of the whole city. He adds too, that as their power was ſo great as to amount to a perfect tyranny, the Kings themſelves were neceſſitated to court their favour by ſuch methods as greatly hurt the conſtitution, which from an Ariſtocracy, degenerated into an abſolute Democracy. For that magiſtracy alone had engroſſed the whole government."

From theſe remarks of the judicious Ariſtotle, it is evident that the Ephori had totally deſtroyed the balance of power eſtabliſhed by Lycurgus. From the tyranny therefore of this magiſtracy proceeded thoſe convulſions which ſo frequently ſhook the ſtate of Sparta, and at laſt gradually brought on its

[1] Ariſt. de Rebuſpubl. lib. 2. c. 7. p. 122. lit. i. vol. 2.

total ſubverſion. But though this fatal alteration in the Spartan conſtitution muſt be imputed to the intrigues of the Ephori and their faction, yet it could never, in my opinion, have been effected, without a previous degeneracy in their manners; which muſt have been the conſequence of ſome deviation from the maxims of Lycurgus.

It appears evidently from the teſtimony of Polybius and Plutarch, that the great ſcheme of the Spartan legiſlator was, to provide for the laſting ſecurity of his country againſt all foreign invaſions, and to perpetuate the bleſſings of liberty and independency to the people. By the generous plan of diſcipline which he eſtabliſhed, he rendered his countrymen invincible at home. By baniſhing gold and ſilver, and prohibiting commerce and the uſe of ſhipping, he propoſed to confine the Spartans within the limits of their own territories; and by taking away the means, to repreſs all deſires of making conqueſts upon their neighbours. But the ſame love of glory and of their country which made them ſo terrible in the field, quickly produced ambition and a luſt of domination; and ambition as naturally opened the way for avarice and corruption. For [a] Polybius truly obſerves, that as long as they extended

[a] Polyb. lib. 6. p. 685. vol. 1. edit. Iſaac. Gronov. 1670.

their

their views no farther than the dominion over their neighbouring ſtates, the produce of their own country was ſufficient for what ſupplies they had occaſion for in ſuch ſhort excurſions. But when, in direct violation of the laws of Lycurgus, they began to undertake more diſtant expeditions both by ſea and land, they quickly felt the want of a publick fund to defray their extraordinary expences. For they found by experience, that neither their iron money, nor their method of trucking the annual produce of their own lands for ſuch commodities as they wanted (which was the only traffick allowed by the laws of Lycurgus) could poſſibly anſwer their demands upon thoſe occaſions. Hence their ambition, as the ſame hiſtorian remarks, laid them under the ſcandalous neceſſity of paying ſervile court to the Perſian monarchs for pecuniary ſupplies and ſubſidies, to impoſe heavy tributes upon the conquered iſlands, and to exact money from the other Grecian ſtates, as occaſions required.

Hiſtorians unanimouſly agree, that wealth, with its attendants luxury and corruption, gained admiſſion at Sparta in the reign of the firſt Agis. Lyſander, like a Hero and a Politician; a man of the greateſt abilities and the greateſt diſhoneſty that Sparta ever produced; rapacious after money, which at the ſame time he deſpiſed, and a ſlave only to

ambition, was the author of an innovation ſo fatal to the manners of his countrymen. After he had enabled his country to give law to all Greece by his conqueſt of Athens, he ſent home that immenſe maſs of wealth, which the plunder of ſo many ſtates had put into his poſſeſſion. The moſt ſenſible men amongſt the Spartans, dreading the fatal conſequences of this capital breach of the inſtitutions of their legiſlator, proteſted ſtrongly before the Ephori againſt the introduction of gold and ſilver, as peſts deſtructive to the publick. The Ephori referred it to the deciſion of the ſenate, who, dazzled with the luſtre of that money, to which 'till that time they had been utter ſtrangers, decreed, "That gold and ſilver money might be admitted for the ſervice of the ſtate; but made it death, if any ſhould ever be found in the poſſeſſion of a private perſon." This deciſion Plutarch cenſures as weak and ſophiſtical [1]. As if Lycurgus was only afraid ſimply of money, and not of that dangerous love of money which is generally its concomitant; a paſſion which is ſo far from being rooted out by the reſtraint laid upon private perſons, that it was rather inflamed by the eſteem and value which was ſet upon money by the publick. Thus, as he juſtly remarks, whilſt

[1] Plut. in Vit. Lyſand. p. 442. lit. E.

they

they barred up the houſes of private citizens againſt the entrance of Wealth by the terror and ſafeguard of the Law, they left their minds more expoſed to the love of money and the influence of corruption, by raiſing an univerſal admiration and deſire of it, as ſomething great and reſpectable. The truth of this remark appears by the inſtance given us by Plutarch, of one Thorax, a great friend of Lyſander's, who was put to death by the Ephori, upon proof that a quantity of ſilver had been actually found in his poſſeſſion.

From that time Sparta became venal, and grew extremely fond of ſubſidies from foreign powers. Ageſilaus, who ſucceeded Agis, and was one of the greateſt of their Kings, behaved in the latter part of his life more like a captain of a band of mercenaries, than a King of Sparta. He received a large ſubſidy from Tachos, at that time King of Egypt, and entered into his ſervice with a body of troops which he had raiſed for that purpoſe. But when Nectanabis, who had rebelled againſt his uncle Tachos, offered him more advantageous terms, he quitted the unfortunate Monarch and went over to his rebellious nephew [1], pleading the intereſt of his country in excuſe for ſo treacherous and infamous an action. So great a change had

[1] Plut. in Vit. Ageſi. p. 617. lit. C.

the introduction of money already made in the manners of the leading Spartans!

Plutarch dates the firſt origin of corruption, that diſeaſe of the body politick, and conſequently the decline of Sparta, from that memorable period, when the Spartans having ſubverted the domination of Athens, glutted themſelves (as he terms it) with gold and ſilver [1]. For when once the love of money had crept into their city, and avarice and the moſt ſordid meanneſs grew up with the poſſeſſion, as luxury, effeminacy, and diſſipation did with the enjoyment of wealth, Sparta was deprived of many of her ancient glories and advantages, and ſunk greatly both in power and reputation, till the reign of Agis and Leonidas [2]. But as the original allotments of land were yet preſerved (the number of which Lycurgus had fixed and decreed to be kept up by a particular law) and were tranſmitted down from father to ſon by hereditary ſucceſſion, the ſame conſtitutional order and equality ſtill remaining, raiſed up the ſtate again, however, from other political lapſes.

Under the reigns of thoſe two Kings happened the mortal blow, which ſubverted the very foundation of their conſtitution. Epi-

[1] In Vit. Agid. p. 796. lit. C.

[2] Ibid. p. 797. lit. C.

tadeus,

ſadeus, one of the Ephori, upon a quarrel with his ſon, carried his reſentment ſo far as to procure a law which permitted every one to alienate their hereditary lands, either by gift or ſale, during their life-time, or by will at their deceaſe. This law produced a fatal alteration in the landed property. For as Leonidas, one of their Kings, who had lived a long time at the court of [1] Seleucus, and married a lady of that country, had introduced the pomp and luxury of the Eaſt at his return to Sparta, the old inſtitutions of Lycurgus, which had fallen into diſuſe, were by his example ſoon treated with contempt. Hence the neceſſity of the luxurious, and the extortion of the avaricious, threw the whole property into ſo few hands [2], that out of ſeven hundred, the number to which the ancient Spartan families were then reduced, about one hundred only were in poſſeſſion of their reſpective hereditary lands allotted by Lycurgus. The reſt, as Plutarch obſerves, lived an idle life in the city, an indigent abject herd, alike deſtitute of fortune and employment; in their wars abroad, indolent diſpirited daſtards; at home ever ripe for ſedition and inſurrections, and greedily catching at every opportunity of embroiling

[1] In Vit. Agid. p. 797. lit. A.
[2] Ibid. lit. E.

affairs, in hopes of ſuch a change as might enable them to retrieve their fortunes. Evils, which the extremes of wealth and indigence are ever productive of in free countries.

Young Agis, the third of that name, and the moſt virtuous and accompliſhed King that ever ſat upon the throne of Sparta ſince the reign of the great Ageſilaus, undertook the reform of the ſtate, and attempted to re-eſtabliſh the old Lycurgic conſtitution, as the only means of extricating his country out of her diſtreſſes, and raiſing her to her former dignity and luſtre. An enterprize attended not only with the greateſt difficulties, but, as the times were ſo corrupt, with the greateſt danger [1]. He began with trying the efficacy of example, and though he had been bred in all the pleaſures and delicacy which affluence could procure, or the fondneſs of his mother and grandmother, who were the wealthieſt people in Sparta, could indulge him in, yet he at once changed his way of life as well as his dreſs, and conformed to the ſtricteſt diſcipline of Lycurgus in every particular. This [2] generous victory over his paſſions, the moſt difficult and moſt glorious of all others, had ſo great an effect

[1] Vita Agid. p. 797. lit. B.
[2] Ibid. lit. C.

amongſt

amongſt the younger Spartans, that they came into his meaſures with more alacrity and zeal than he could poſſibly have hoped for. Encouraged by this ſucceſs, Agis brought over ſome of the principal Spartans, amongſt whom was his uncle Ageſilaus, whoſe influence he made uſe of to perſuade his mother, [1] who was ſiſter to Ageſilaus, to join his party. For her wealth, and the great number of her friends, dependants, and debtors, made her extremely powerful, and gave her great weight in all public tranſactions.

His mother, terrified at firſt at her ſon's raſhneſs, condemned the whole as the viſionary ſcheme of a young man, who was attempting a meaſure not only prejudicial to the ſtate, but quite impracticable. But when the reaſonings of Ageſilaus had convinced her that it would not only be of the greateſt utility to the publick, but might be effected with great eaſe and ſafety, and the King himſelf intreated her to contribute her wealth and intereſt to promote an enterprize which would redound ſo much to his glory and reputation; [2] ſhe and the reſt of her female

[1] Ibid. p. 798. lit. B.

[2] Something ſeems plainly to be wanting in this paſſage, which is ſtrangely obſcure and intricate. It is evident that Agis employed his uncle Ageſilaus to perſuade his mother, who was Ageſilaus's ſiſter: *την μητέρα πείθειν, ἀδελφὴν οὖσαν τῷ Ἀγησιλάῳ.* The king himſelf intreats

male friends at laſt changed their ſentiments. Fired then with the ſame glorious emulation, and ſtimulated to virtue, as it were by ſome divine impulſe, they not only voluntarily ſpurred on Agis, but ſummoned and encouraged all their friends, and incited the other ladies to engage in ſo generous an enterprize. [1] For they were conſcious (as Plutarch obſerves) of the great aſcendency which the Spartan women had always over their huſbands, who gave their wives a much greater ſhare in the publick adminiſtration, than their wives allowed them in the management

intreats his mother to aſſiſt him, αὐτος δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐδειτο τῆς μητρος, &c. And after he has enumerated the advantages which would reſult from his ſcheme, Plutarch abruptly adds, ὅτο μετέπεσον ταις γνώμαις αἱ γυναῖκες, &c. in the plural number, though he had juſt before mentioned Agis's mother only, as the woman applied to on this occaſion. It is evident therefore, that his grandmother and all their female friends and relations muſt have been preſent at that time, though not mentioned, and that they were the only Spartan ladies who came heartily into his ſcheme. For when Agis afterwards offers his whole fortune to the publick, he aſſures the people that his mother and grandmother, τὰς μητέρας, and his friends and relations, who were the richeſt families in Sparta, were ready to do the ſame. As Agis certainly includes the wives of his friends and relations, and mentions no other women, I have taken that ſpeech for my guide in giving the ſenſe of this whole paſſage, in which I could get no aſſiſtance from any of the commentators.

[1] In Vit. Agid. p. 798. lit. D.

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of their domeſtick affairs. A circumſtance which at that time had drawn almoſt all the wealth of Sparta into the hands of the women, and proved a terrible, and almoſt unſurmountable obſtacle to Agis. For the Ladies had violently oppoſed a ſcheme of reformation, which not only tended to deprive them of thoſe pleaſures and trifling ornaments, which, from their ignorance of what was truly good and laudable, they abſurdly looked upon as their ſupreme happineſs, but to rob them of that reſpect and authority which they derived from their ſuperior wealth. Such of them therefore as were unwilling to give up theſe advantages, applied to Leonidas, and intreated him, as he was the more reſpectable man for his age and experience, to check his young hot-headed colleague, and quaſh whatever attempts he ſhould make to carry his deſigns into execution. The older Spartans were no leſs averſe to a reformation of that nature. For as they were deeply immerſed in corruption, they trembled at the very name of Lycurgus, as much as runaway ſlaves, when retaken, do at the ſight of their maſters.

Leonidas was extremely ready to ſide with and aſſiſt the rich, but durſt not openly oppoſe Agis, for fear of the people, who were eager for ſuch a revolution. He attempted there-

therefore to counteract all his attempts underhand, and insinuated to the magistrates, that Agis aimed at setting up a tyranny, by bribing the poor with the fortunes of the rich; and proposed the partition of lands and the abolition of debts as the means of purchasing guards for himself only, not citizens, as he pretended, for Sparta.

Agis however pursued his design, and having procured his friend Lysander to be elected one of the Ephori, immediately laid his scheme before the senate. The chief heads of his plan were: "That all debts should be "totally remitted; that the whole land "should be divided into a certain number of "lots; and that the ancient discipline and "customs of Lycurgus should be revived." Warm debates were occasioned in the senate by this proposal, which at last was [1] rejected by a majority of one only. [2] Lysander in the mean time convoked an assembly of the people, where after he had harangued. Mandroclidas and Agesilaus beseeched them not to suffer the majesty of Sparta to be any longer trampled upon for the sake of a few luxurious overgrown citizens, who imposed upon them at pleasure. They reminded them not only of the responses of ancient

[1] Vit. Agid. p. 800. lit. A.

[2] Ibid. 799. lit. A.

oracles,

oracles, which enjoined them to beware of avarice, as the peſt of Sparta, but alſo of thoſe ſo lately given by the oracle at Paſiphae,[1] which, as they aſſured the people, commanded the Spartans to return to that perfect equality of poſſeſſions, which was ſettled by the law firſt inſtituted by Lycurgus. Agis ſpoke laſt in this aſſembly; and, to enforce the whole by example, told them in a very few words, "That he offered a moſt ample "contribution towards the eſtabliſhment of "that polity, of which he himſelf was "the author. That he now reſigned his "whole patrimony into the common ſtock, "which conſiſted not only of rich arable "and paſture land, but of 600 talents be-"ſides in coined money. He added, that "his mother, grandmother, friends and re-"lations, who were the moſt wealthy of all "the citizens of Sparta, were ready to do "the ſame."

The people, ſtruck with the magnanimity and generoſity of Agis, received his offer with the loudeſt applauſe, and extolled him, as the only King who for three hundred years paſt had been worthy of the throne of Sparta. This provoked Leonidas to fly out

[1] This is an oracle mentioned by Plutarch, about which the learned are not agreed: however, it ſeems to have given its reſponſes in dreams.

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into the moſt open and violent oppoſition; from the double motive of avarice and envy. For he was ſenſible, that if this ſcheme took place, he ſhould not only be compelled to follow their example, but that the ſurrender of his eſtate would then come from him with ſo ill a grace, that the honour of the whole meaſure would be attributed ſolely to his colleague. Lyſander, finding Leonidas and his party too powerful in the ſenate, determined to proſecute and expel him for the breach of a very old law, which forbid any of the royal family to intermarry with foreigners, or to bring up any children which they might have by ſuch marriage, and inflicted the penalty of death upon any one who ſhould leave Sparta to reſide in foreign countries.

After Lyſander had taken care that Leonidas ſhould be informed of the crime laid to his charge, he with the reſt of the Ephori, who were of his party, addreſſed themſelves to the ceremony of obſerving a ſign from heaven [1]. A piece of ſtate-craft moſt probably introduced formerly by the Ephori to

[1] The reader may be glad perhaps to find here the ceremony made uſe of upon this occaſion. Vit. Agid. p. 800. lit. B. δι' ἐτων ἐννέα λαβόντες οι Ἔφοροι, &c. Every ninth year the Ephori taking the opportunity of a clear ſtill night, when the moon did not appear, ſat ſilently

to keep the Kings in awe, and perfectly well adapted to the ſuperſtition of the people. Lyſander affirming that they had ſeen the uſual ſign, which declared that Leonidas had ſinned againſt the Gods, ſummoned him to his trial, and produced evidence ſufficient to convict him. At the ſame time he ſpirited up Cleombrotus, who had married the daughter of Leonidas, and was of the royal blood, to put in his claim to the ſucceſſion. Leonidas, terrified at theſe daring meaſures, fled, and took ſanctuary in the temple of Minerva: he was depoſed therefore for non-appearance, and his crown given to his ſon-in-law Cleombrotus.

But as ſoon as the term of Lyſander's magiſtracy expired, the new Ephori, who were elected by the prevailing intereſt of the oppoſite party, immediately undertook the protection of Leonidas. They ſummoned Lyſander and his friends to anſwer for their decrees for cancelling debts, and dividing the lands, as contrary to the laws, and treaſonable innovations; for ſo they termed all attempts to reſtore the ancient conſtitution

ſilently and obſerved the ſky with great attention; and, if they ſaw a ſtar ſhoot, they judged the kings had offended the Gods; and removed them from the government, till an oracle came from Delphos which was favourable to them.

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of Lycurgus. Alarmed at this, Lyſander perſuaded the two Kings to join in oppoſing the Ephori; who, as he plainly proved, aſſumed an authority which they had not the leaſt right to, as long as the Kings acted together in concert. The Kings, convinced by his reaſons, armed a great number of the youth, releaſed all who were priſoners for debt, and thus attended went into the Forum, where they depoſed the Ephori, and procured their own friends to be elected into that office, of whom Ageſilaus the uncle of Agis was one. By the care and humanity of Agis, no blood was ſpilt on this memorable occaſion. He even protected his antagoniſt Leonidas againſt the deſigns which Ageſilaus had formed upon his life, and ſent him under a ſafe convoy to Tegea.

After this bold ſtroke, all oppoſition ſunk before them, and every thing ſucceeded to their wiſhes; when the ſingle avarice of Ageſilaus, that moſt baneful peſt, as Plutarch terms it, which had ſubverted a conſtitution the moſt excellent, and the moſt worthy of Sparta that had ever yet been eſtabliſhed, overſet the whole enterpriſe. By the character which Plutarch gives of Ageſilaus [1], he appears to have been artful and eloquent, but at the ſame time effemi-

[1] Plut. Vit. Agid. p. 798. lit. A.

nate,

ſtate, corrupt in his manners, avaritious, and ſo bad a man, that he engaged in this projected revolution with no other view but that of extricating himſelf from an immenſe load of debt, which he had moſt probably contracted to ſupport his luxury. As ſoon therefore as the two Kings, who were both young men, agreed to proceed upon the abolition of debts, and the partition of lands, Ageſilaus artfully perſuaded them not to attempt both at once, for fear of exciting ſome terrible commotion in the city. He aſſured them farther, that if the rich ſhould once be reconciled to the law for cancelling the debts, the law for dividing the lands would go down with them quietly and without the leaſt obſtruction. The Kings aſſented to his opinion, and Lyſander himſelf was brought over to it, deceived by the ſame ſpecious, though pernicious reaſoning: calling in therefore all the bills, bonds, and pecuniary obligations, they piled them up, and burnt them all publickly in the Forum, to the great mortification of the moneyed men, and the uſurers. But Ageſilaus in the joy of his heart could not [1] refrain from joking upon the occaſion, and told them with a ſneer, That whatever they might think of the matter, it was the bright-

[1] Ibid. p. 801. lit. B.

eſt and moſt chearful flame, and the pureſt bonfire, he had ever beheld in his life-time. Ageſilaus had now carried his point, and his conduct proves, that the Spartans had learnt the art of turning publick meaſures into private jobs, as well as their politer neighbours. For though the people call loudly for the partition of the lands, and the Kings gave orders for it to be done immediately, Ageſilaus contrived to throw new obſtacles in the way, and protracted the time by various pretences, till Agis was obliged to march with the Spartan auxiliaries to aſſiſt their allies the Achæans. For he was in poſſeſſion of a moſt fertile and extenſive landed eſtate at the very time when he owed more than he was worth; and as he had got rid of all his incumbrances at once by the firſt decree, and never intended to part with a ſingle foot of his land, it was by no means his intereſt to promote the execution of the ſecond.

The Spartan troops were moſtly indigent young men, who, elate with their freedom from the bonds of uſury, and big with the hopes of a ſhare in the lands at their return, followed Agis with the greateſt vigour and alacrity, and behaved ſo well in their march, that they reminded the admiring Greeks of the excellent diſcipline and decorum for which the Spartans were formerly ſo famous under the moſt renowned of their ancient

ancient leaders. But whilſt Agis was in the field, affairs at home took a very unhappy turn in his disfavour. The tyrannical behaviour of Ageſilaus, who fleeced the people with inſupportable exactions, and ſtuck at no meaſure, however infamous or criminal, which would bring in money, produced another revolution in favour of Leonidas. For the people, enraged at being tricked out of the promiſed partition of the lands, which they imputed to Agis and Cleombrotus, and deteſting the rapaciouſneſs of Ageſilaus, readily joined that party which conſpired to reſtore Leonidas. Agis finding affairs in this deſperate ſituation at his return, gave up all for loſt, and took ſanctuary in the temple of Minerva, as Cleombrotus had done in the temple of Neptune.

Though Cleombrotus was the chief object of Leonidas's reſentment, yet he ſpared his life at the interceſſion of his daughter Chelonis, the wife of Cleombrotus; but condemned him to perpetual exile. The generous Chelonis gave a ſignal inſtance, upon this occaſion, of that heroic virtue, for which the Spartan ladies were once ſo remarkably eminent. When her father was expelled by the intrigues of Lyſander, ſhe followed him into exile, and refuſed to ſhare his crown with Cleombrotus. In this calamitous reverſe of fortune, ſhe was deaf to

all intreaties, and rather choſe to partake of the miſeries of baniſhment with her huſband, than all the pleaſures and grandeur of Sparta with her father. [1] Plutarch pays the ladies a fine compliment upon this occaſion, when he ſays, "That unleſs Cleombrotus ſhould have been wholly corrupted "by falſe ambition, he muſt have deemed "himſelf more truly happy in a ſtate of "baniſhment with ſuch a wife, than he could "have been upon a throne without her."

But though Cleombrotus eſcaped death, yet nothing but the blood of Agis could ſatisfy the vindictive rage of the ungrateful Leonidas, who, in the former revolution, owed his life to that unfortunate Prince's geroſity. After many ineffectual attempts to entice Agis from his aſylum, three of his intimate friends in whom he moſt confided, who uſed to accompany and guard him to the baths and back again to the temple, betrayed him to his enemies. Amphares, the chief of theſe, and the contriver of the plot, was one of the new Ephori created after the depoſition of Ageſilaus. This wretch had lately borrowed a quantity of valuable plate, and a number of magnificent veſtments of Agis's mother Ageſiſtrata, and determined to make them his own by the

[1] Vit. Agid. p. 803. lit. A.

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deſtruction of Agis and his family; at their return therefore in their uſual friendly manner from the baths, he firſt attacked Agis by virtue of his office, whilſt Democharés and Arceſilaus, the other two, ſeized and dragged him to the publick priſon. Agis ſupported all theſe indignities with the utmoſt magnanimity: and when the Ephori queſtioned him, whether Ageſilaus and Lyſander did not conſtrain him to do what he had done, and whether he did not repent of the ſteps he had taken; he undauntedly took the whole upon himſelf, and told them that he gloried in his ſcheme, which was the reſult of his emulation to follow the example of the great Lycurgus. Stung with this anſwer, the Ephori condemned him to die by their own authority, and ordered the officers to carry him to the place in the priſon where the malefactors were ſtrangled. But when the officers and even the mercenary ſoldiers of Leonidas refuſed to be concerned in ſo infamous and unprecedented an action as laying hands upon their King, Democharés threatening and abuſing them greatly for their diſobedience, ſeized Agis with his own hands, and dragged him to the execution-room, where he was ordered to be diſpatched immediately. Agis ſubmitted to his fate with equal intrepidity and reſignation, reproving one of the executioners who deplor-

ed his calamities, and declaring himſelf infinitely happier than his murderers. The unfeeling and treacherous Amphares attended the execution, and as ſoon as Agis was dead, he admitted his mother and grandmother into the priſon, who came to interceed that Agis might be allowed to make his defence before the people. The wretch aſſured the mother, with an inſulting ſneer, that her ſon ſhould ſuffer no heavier puniſhment than he had done already; and immediately ordered her mother Archidamia, who was extremely old, to execution. As ſoon as ſhe was dead, he bid Ageſiſtrata enter the room, where, at the ſight of the dead bodies, ſhe could not refrain from kiſſing her ſon, and crying out, that his too great lenity and good-nature had been their ruin. The ſavage Amphares, laying hold of thoſe words, told her, that as ſhe approved of her ſon's actions ſhe ſhould ſhare his fate. Ageſiſtrata met death with the reſolution of an old Spartan Heroine, praying only that this whole affair might not prove prejudicial to her country.

Thus fell the gallant Agis in the cauſe of liberty and publick virtue, by the perfidy of his mercenary friends, and the violence of a corrupt and moſt profligate faction. I have given a more particular detail of the cataſtrophe of this unfortunate Prince as tranſmitted

mitted to us by Plutarch, becauſe it furniſhes convincing proofs, how greatly the introduction of wealth had corrupted and debaſed the once upright and generous ſpirit of the Spartans.

Archidamus, the brother of Agis, eluded the ſearch made for him by Leonidas, and eſcaped the maſſacre by flying from Sparta. But Leonidas compelled his wife Agiatis, who was a young lady of the greateſt beauty in all Greece, and ſole heireſs to a vaſt eſtate, to marry his own ſon Cleomenes, though Agiatis had but juſt lain-in of a ſon, and the match was entirely contrary to her inclinations. This event however produced a very different effect from what Leonidas intended, and after his death proved the ruin of his party, and revenged the murder of Agis [1]. For Cleomenes, who was very young, and extremely fond of his wife, would ſhed ſympathiſing tears whenever ſhe related the melancholy fate of Agis, and occaſionally deſire her to explain his intentions, and the nature of his ſcheme, to which he would liſten with the greateſt attention. From that time he determined to follow ſo glorious an example, but kept the reſolution ſecret in his own breaſt till the means and opportunity ſhould offer. He was ſenſible

[1] Plut. Vit. Cleom. p. 805. lit. B.

that an attempt of that nature would be utterly impracticable whilſt his father lived; who, like the reſt of the leading citizens, had wholly given himſelf up to a life of eaſe and luxury. Warned too by the fate of Agis, he knew how extremely dangerous it was even once to mention the old frugality and ſimplicity of manners, which depended upon the obſervance of the diſcipline and inſtitutions of Lycurgus. But as ſoon as ever he ſucceeded to the Crown at the death of his father, and found himſelf the ſole reigning King of Sparta without a colleague, he immediately applied his whole care and ſtudy to accompliſh that great change which he had before projected. For he obſerved the manners of the Spartans in general were grown extremely corrupt and diſſolute; the rich ſacrificing the publick intereſt to their own private avarice and luxury; the poor, from their extreme indigence, averſe to the toils of war, careleſs and negligent of education and diſcipline; whilſt the Ephori had engroſſed the whole royal power, and left him in reality nothing but the empty title: Circumſtances greatly mortifying to an aſpiring young Monarch, who panted eagerly after glory, and impatiently wiſhed to retrieve the loſt reputation of his countrymen.

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He began by ſounding his moſt intimate friend, one Xenares, at a diſtance only, enquiring what ſort of man Agis was, and which way, and by whoſe advice, he was drawn into thoſe unfortunate meaſures. Xenares, who attributed all his queſtions to the curioſity natural to a young man, very readily told him the whole ſtory, and explained ingenuouſly every particular of the affair as it really happened. But when he remarked that Cleomenes often returned to the charge, and every time with greater eagerneſs, more and more admiring and applauding the ſcheme and character of Agis, he immediately ſaw through his deſign. After reproving him, therefore, ſeverely for talking and behaving thus like a madman, Xenares broke off all friendſhip and intercourſe with him, though he had too much honour to betray his friend's ſecret. Cleomenes, not in the leaſt diſcouraged at this repulſe, but concluding that he ſhould meet with the ſame reception from the reſt of the wealthy and powerful citizens, determined to truſt none of them, but to take upon himſelf the whole care and management of his ſcheme [1]. However, as he was ſenſible that the execution of it would be much more feaſible, when his country was involved in war, than in a ſtate

[1] Plut. Vit. Cleom. p. 809. lit. A.

of

of profound peace, he waited for a proper opportunity; which the Achæans quickly furniſhed him with. For Aratus, the great projector of the famous Achæan league, into which he had already brought many of the Grecian ſtates, holding Cleomenes extremely cheap, as a raw unexperienced boy, thought this a favourable opportunity of trying how the Spartans ſtood affected towards that Union Without the leaſt previous notice, therefore, he ſuddenly invaded ſuch of the Arcadians as were in alliance with Sparta, and committed great devaſtations in that part of the country which lay in the neighbourhood of Achaia.

The Ephori, alarmed at this unexpected attack, ſent Cleomenes at the head of the Spartan forces to oppoſe the invaſion. The young Hero behaved well, and frequently baffled that old experienced commander. But his countrymen growing weary of the war, and refuſing to concur in the meaſures he propoſed for carrying it on, he recalled Achidamus the brother of Agis from baniſhment, who had a ſtrict hereditary right to the other moiety of the kingdom; imagining that when the throne was properly filled according to law, and the regal power preſerved entire by the Union of the two Kings, it would reſtore the balance of government, and weaken the authority of

the Ephori. But the faction which had murdered Agis, juſtly dreading the reſentment of Archidamus for ſo atrocious a crime, took care privately to aſſaſſinate him upon his return.

Cleomenes now more than ever intent upon bringing his great project to bear, bribed the Ephori with large ſums to intruſt him with the management of the war[1]. His mother Crateſiclea not only ſupplied him with money upon this occaſion, but married one Megiſtonus, a man of the greateſt weight and authority in the city, purpoſely to bring him over to her ſon's intereſt. Cleomenes taking the field, totally defeated the army of Aratus, and killed Lydiadas the Megalopolitan General. This victory, which was entirely owing to the conduct of Cleomenes, not only raiſed the courage of his ſoldiers, but gave them ſo high an opinion of his abilities, that he ſeems to have been recalled by his enemies, jealous moſt probably of his growing intereſt with the army. For[2] Plutarch, who is not very methodical in his relations, informs us, that after this affair, Cleomenes convinced his father-in-law, Megiſtonus, of the neceſſity of taking off the Ephori, and reducing the citizens to their

[1] Plut. Vit. Cleom. p. 807. lit. B.

[2] Vit. Cleom. p. 808. lit. A.

ancient

ancient equality according to the inſtitutions of Lycurgus, as the only means of reſtoring Sparta to her former ſovereignty over Greece. This ſcheme therefore muſt have been privately ſettled at Sparta. For we are next told, that Cleomenes again took the field, carrying with him ſuch of the citizens as he ſuſpected were moſt likely to oppoſe him. He took ſome cities from the Achæans that campaign, and made himſelf maſter of ſome important places, but harraſſed his troops ſo much with many marches and countermarches, that moſt of the Spartans remained behind in Arcadia at their own requeſt, whilſt he marched back to Sparta with his mercenary forces, and ſuch of his friends as he could moſt confide in. He timed his march ſo well that he entered Sparta whilſt the Ephori were at ſupper, and diſpatched Euryclidas before with three or four of his moſt truſty friends and a few ſoldiers to perform the execution. For Cleomenes well knew that Agis owed his ruin to his too cautious timidity, and his too great lenity and moderation. Whilſt Euryclidas therefore amuſed the Ephori with a pretended meſſage from Cleomenes, the reſt fell upon them ſword in hand, and killed four upon the ſpot, with above ten perſons more who came to their aſſiſtance. Ageſilaus the ſurvivor of them fell, and counterfeiting himſelf

ſelf dead, gained an opportunity of eſcaping. Next morning as ſoon as it was light, Cleomenes proſcribed and baniſhed fourſcore of the moſt dangerous citizens, and removed all the chairs of the Ephori out of the Forum, except one, which he reſerved for his own ſeat of judicature. He then convoked an aſſembly of the people, to whom he apologized for his late actions. [r] He ſhewed them, in a very artful and elaborate ſpeech, "the nature and juſt extent of the power of the Ephori, the fatal conſequences of the authority they had uſurped of governing the ſtate by their own arbitrary will, and of depoſing and putting their Kings to death without allowing them a legal hearing in their own defence. He urged the example of Lycurgus himſelf, who came armed into the Forum when he firſt propoſed his laws, as a proof that it was impoſſible to root out thoſe peſts of the commonwealth, which had been imported from other countries, luxury, the parent of that vain expence which runs ſuch numbers in debt, uſury, and thoſe more ancient evils, wealth and poverty, without violence and bloodſhed: That he ſhould have thought himſelf happy, if like an able phyſician, he could have radically cured the diſeaſes of his country without pain: but that

[r] Vit. Cleom. p. 809. lit. A.

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neceſſity had compelled him to do what he had already done, in order to procure an equal partition of the lands, and the abolition of their debts, as well as to enable him to fill up the number of the citizens with a ſelect number of the braveſt foreigners, that Sparta might be no longer expoſed to the depredations of her enemies for want of hands to defend her."

To convince the people of the ſincerity of his intentions, he firſt gave up his whole fortune to the publick ſtock; Megiſtonus, his father-in-law, with his other friends, and all the reſt of the citizens, followed his example. In the diviſion of the lands, he generouſly ſet apart equal portions for all thoſe citizens he had baniſhed, and promiſed to recall them as ſoon as the publick tranquillity was reſtored. He next revived the ancient method of education, the gymnaſtick exerciſes, publick meals, and all other inſtitutions of Lycurgus; and leſt the people, unaccuſtomed to the denomination of a ſingle King, ſhould ſuſpect that he aimed at eſtabliſhing a tyranny, he aſſociated his brother Euclidas with him in the kingdom. By training up the youth in the old military diſcipline, and arming them in a new and better manner, he once more recovered the reputation of the Spartan militia, and raiſed his country to ſo

great

great a height of power, [1] that Greece in a very ſhort time ſaw Sparta giving law to all Peloponneſus.

The Achæans, humbled by repeated defeats, and begging peace of Cleomenes upon his own terms, the generous victor deſired only to be appointed general of their famous league, and offered upon that condition to reſtore all the cities and priſoners he had taken. The Achæans gladly conſenting to ſuch eaſy terms, Cleomenes releaſed and ſent home all the perſons of rank amongſt his priſoners, but was obliged by ſickneſs to defer the day appointed for the convention, 'till his return from Sparta. [2] This unhappy delay was fatal to Greece. For Aratus, who had enjoyed that honour thirty-three years, could not bear the thought of having it wreſted from him by ſo young a Prince, whoſe glory he envied as much as he dreaded his valour. Finding therefore all other methods ineffectual, he had recourſe to the deſperate remedy of calling in the Macedonians to his aſſiſtance, and ſacrificed the liberty of his own conntry, as well as that of Greece, to his own private pique and jealouſy. Thus the moſt publick-ſpirited aſſertor of liberty, and the moſt implacable

[1] Parallel. inter Agid. & Cleom. & T. & C. Gracch. p. 844. lit. D.

[2] Vit. Cleom. p. 811. lit. C.

enemy

enemy to all tyrants in general, brought back thoſe very people into the heart of Greece, whom he had driven out formerly purely from his hatred to tyranny, and ſullied a glorious life with a blot never to be eraſed, from the deteſtable motives of envy and revenge. A melancholy proof, as Plutarch moralizes upon the occaſion, of the weakneſs of human nature, which with an aſſemblage of the moſt excellent qualities is unable to exhibit the model of a virtue completely perfect. A circumſtance which ought to excite our compaſſion towards thoſe blemiſhes, which we unavoidably meet with in the moſt exalted characters.

Cleomenes ſupported this unequal war againſt the Achæans and the whole power of Macedon with the greateſt vigour, and by his ſucceſs gave many convincing proofs of his abilities; but venturing a deciſive battle at Sallaſia, he was totally defeated by the ſuperior number of his enemies, and the treachery of Damoteles, an officer in whom he greatly confided, who was bribed to betray him by Antigonus. Out of ſix thouſand Spartans, two hundred only eſcaped, the reſt with their king Euclidas were left dead on the field of battle. Cleomenes retired to Sparta, and from thence paſſed over to Ptolemy Euergetes king of Egypt, with whom he was

was then in alliance, to claim the aſſiſtance he had formerly promiſed. But the death of that Monarch, which followed ſoon after, deprived him of all hopes of ſuccour from that quarter. The Spartan manners were as odious to his ſucceſſor Ptolemy Philopater, a weak and diſſolute prince, as the Spartan virtue was terrible to his debauched effeminate courtiers. Whenever Cleomenes appeared at court, the general whiſper ran, that he came as a lion in the midſt of ſheep; a light in which a brave man muſt neceſſarily appear to a herd of ſuch ſervile daſtards. Confined at laſt by the jealouſy of Ptolemy, who was kept in a perpetual alarm by the inſinuations of his iniquitous miniſter Soſybius, he with about twelve more of his generous Spartan friends broke out of priſon, determined upon death or liberty. In their progreſs through the ſtreets, they firſt ſlew one Ptolemy, a great favourite of the King's, who had been their ſecret enemy; and meeting the governor of the city, who came at the firſt noiſe of the tumult, they routed his guards and attendants, dragged him out of his chariot, and killed him. After this they ranged uncontrouled through the whole city of Alexandria, the inhabitants flying every where before them, and not a man daring either to aſſiſt or oppoſe them. Such terror could thirteen brave men only ſtrike into one of the

moſt populous cities in the univerſe, where the citizens were bred up in luxury, and ſtrangers to the uſe of arms! Cleomenes, deſpairing of aſſiſtance from the citizens, whom he had in vain ſummoned to aſſert their liberty, declared ſuch abject cowards fit only to be governed by women. Scorning therefore to fall by the hands of the deſpicable Egyptians, he with the reſt of the Spartans fell deſperately by their own ſwords, according to the heroiſm of thoſe ages [1].

The liberty and happineſs of Sparta expired with Cleomenes [2]. For the remains of the Spartan hiſtory furniſh us with very little after his death, beſides the calamities and miſeries of that unhappy ſtate, ariſing from their inteſtine diviſions. Machanidas, by the aid of one of the factions which at that time rent that miſerable republick, uſurped the throne, and eſtabliſhed an abſolute tyranny. One Nabis, a tyrant, compared to whom even Nero himſelf may be termed merciful, ſucceeded at the death of Machanidas, who fell in battle by the hand of the great Philopæmen. The Ætolians treacherouſly murdered Nabis, and endeavoured to ſeize the dominion of Sparta; but they were prevented by Philopæmen, who partly by

[1] Plut. Vit. Cleom. p. 822. lit. E.

[2] Polyb. lib. 4. p. 479.

force,

force, partly by perſuaſion, brought the Spartans into the Achæan league, and afterwards totally aboliſhed the inſtitutions of Lycurgus[1]. A moſt inhuman and moſt iniquitous action, as Plutarch terms it, which muſt brand the character of that hero with eternal infamy. As if he was ſenſible that as long as the diſcipline of Lycurgus ſubſiſted, the minds of the Spartan youth could never be thoroughly tamed, or effectually broke to the yoke of foreign government. Wearied out at laſt by repeated oppreſſions, the Spartans applied to the Romans for redreſs of all their grievances; and their complaints produced that war which ended in the diſſolution of the Achæan league, and the ſubjection of Greece to the Roman domination.

I have entered into a more minute detail of the Spartan conſtitution, as ſettled by Lycurgus, than I at firſt propoſed; becauſe the maxims of that celebrated lawgiver are ſo directly oppoſite to thoſe which our modern politicians lay down as the baſis of the ſtrength and power of a nation.

Lycurgus found his country in the moſt terrible of all ſituations, a ſtate of anarchy and confuſion. The rich, inſolent and oppreſſive; the poor groaning under a load of debt, mutinous from deſpair, and ready to

[1] Plut. Vit. Philopæm. p. 365. lit. E.

cut the throats of their uſurious oppreſſors. To remedy theſe evils, did this wiſe politician encourage navigation, ſtrike out new branches of commerce, and make the moſt of thoſe excellent harbours and other natural advantages which the maritime ſituation of his country afforded? Did he introduce and promote arts and ſciences, that by acquiring and diffuſing new wealth amongſt his countrymen, he might make his nation, in the language of our political writers, ſecure, powerful, and happy? Juſt the reverſe. After he had new-modelled the conſtitution, and ſettled the juſt balance between the powers of government, he aboliſhed all debts, divided the whole land amongſt his countrymen by equal lots, and put an end to all diſſentions about property, by introducing a perfect equality. He extirpated luxury and a luſt of wealth, which he looked upon as the peſts of every free country, by prohibiting the uſe of gold and ſilver; and barred up the entrance againſt their return by interdicting navigation and commerce, and expelling all arts, but what were immediately neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence. As he was ſenſible that juſt and virtuous manners are the beſt ſupport of the internal peace and happineſs of every kingdom, he eſtabliſhed a moſt excellent plan of education for training up his countrymen, from their very infancy, in the ſtrict-

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eſt obſervance of their religion and laws, and the habitual practice of thoſe virtues which can alone ſecure the bleſſings of liberty, and perpetuate their duration. To protect his country from external invaſions, he formed the whole body of the people, without diſtinction, into one well armed, well diſciplined national militia, whoſe leading principle was the love of their country, and who eſteemed death in its defence, the moſt exalted height of glory to which a Spartan was capable of attaining. Nor were theſe elevated ſentiments confined ſolely to the men; the colder breaſts of the women caught fire at the glorious flame, and glowed even with ſuperior ardour. For when their troops marched againſt an enemy, "[1] to bring back their ſhields, or to be brought home upon them," was the laſt command which the Spartan mothers gave their ſons at parting.

Such was the method which Lycurgus took to ſecure the independency and happineſs of his country; and the event ſhewed, that his inſtitutions were founded upon maxims of the trueſt and juſteſt policy. For I

[1] To bring back their ſhields implied victory; to be brought home upon them, a glorious death in defence of their country; becauſe the Spartans, if poſſible, brought back and buried all who fell in battle in their native country.

cannot help obſerving upon the occaſion, that from the time of Lycurgus to the introduction of wealth by Lyſander in the reign of the firſt Agis, a ſpace of five hundred years, we meet with no mutiny amongſt the people, upon account of the ſeverity of his diſcipline, but on the contrary the moſt religious reverence for, and the moſt willing and chearful obedience to, the laws he eſtabliſhed. As on the other hand, the wiſdom of his military inſtitutions is evident from this conſideration; That the nationel militia alone of Sparta, a ſmall inſignificant country as to extent, ſituated in a nook only of the Morea, not only gave laws to Greece, but made the Perſian monarchs tremble at their very name, though abſolute maſters of the richeſt and moſt extenſive empire the world then knew.

I obſerve farther, that the introduction of wealth by Lyſander, after the conqueſt of Athens, brought back all thoſe vices and diſſentions which the prohibition of the uſe of money had formerly baniſhed; and that all hiſtorians aſſign that open violation of the laws of Lycurgus, as the period from which the decadence of Sparta is to be properly dated. I obſerve too, with Plutarch, that though the manners of the Spartans were greatly corrupted by the introduction of wealth, yet that the landed intereſt (as I may term it) which ſubſiſted as long as the ori-

original allotments of land remained unalienable, ſtill preſerved their ſtate; notwithſtanding the many abuſes which had crept into their conſtitution. But that as ſoon as ever the landed eſtates became alienable by law, the moneyed intereſt prevailed, and at laſt totally ſwallowed up the landed, which the hiſtorians remark as the death's-wound of their conſtitution. For the martial virtue of the citizens not only ſunk with the loſs of their eſtates, but their number, and conſequently the ſtrength of the ſtate, diminiſhed in the ſame proportion. [1] Ariſtotle, who wrote about ſixty years after the death of Lyſander, in his examen of the Spartan Republick, quite condemns that law which permitted the alienation of their lands. For he affirms, that the ſame quantity of land, which, whilſt equally divided, ſupplied a militia of fifteen hundred horſe, and thirty thouſand heavy armed foot, could not in his time furniſh one thouſand; [2] ſo that the ſtate was utterly ruined for want of men to defend it. In the reign of Agis the third, about a hundred years after the time of Ariſtotle, the number of the old Spartan families was dwindled (as I remarked before) to ſeven hundred; out of which about one hundred rich

[1] Ariſtot. de Rebuſpubl. lib. 2. cap. 7. fol. 122. lit. Θ.

[2] Ἡ πόλις ἀπόλετο διὰ τὴν ὀλιγανθρωπίαν. Ariſtot. ibid.

overgrown families had engroſſed the whole land of Sparta, which Lycurgus had formerly divided into thirty-nine thouſand ſhares, and aſſigned for the ſupport of as many families. So true it is, that a landed intereſt diffuſed through a whole people is not only the real ſtrength, but the ſureſt bulwark of the liberty and independency, of a free country.

From the tragical fate of the third Agis we learn, that when abuſes introduced by corruption are ſuffered by length of time to take root in the conſtitution, they will be termed by thoſe whoſe intereſt it is to ſupport them, eſſential parts of the conſtitution itſelf; and all attempts to remove them will ever be clamoured againſt by ſuch men as attempt to ſubvert it: As the example of Cleomenes will teach us, that the publick virtue of one great man may not only ſave his falling country from ruin, but raiſe her to her former dignity and luſtre, by bringing her back to thoſe principles on which her conſtitution was originally founded. Though the violent remedies made uſe of by Cleomenes never ought to be applied, unleſs the diſeaſe is grown too deſperate to admit of a cure by milder methods.

I ſhall endeavour to ſhew in its proper place, that the conſtitution eſtabliſhed by Lycurgus,

curgus, which ſeemed to Polybius to be rather of divine than of human inſtitution, and was ſo much celebrated by the moſt eminent philoſophers of antiquity, is much inferior to the Britiſh conſtitution as ſettled at the Revolution. But I cannot quit this ſubject without recommending that excellent inſtitution of Lycurgus, which provided for the education of the children of the whole community without diſtinction. An example which under proper regulations would be highly worthy of our imitation, ſince nothing could give a more effectual check to the reigning vices and follies of the preſent age, or contribute ſo much to a reformation of manners, as to form the minds of the riſing generation by the principles of religion and virtue. Where the manners of a people are good, very few laws will be wanting; but when their manners are depraved, all the laws in the world will be inſufficient to reſtrain the exceſſes of the human paſſions. For as Horace juſtly obſerves ——

Quid leges ſine moribus
Vanæ proficiunt, Ode 24. lib. 3.

[1] Ὥστε θειοτέραν τὴν ἐπίνοιαν ἢ κατ' ἄνθρωπον αὐτὸ νομίζειν. Polyb. lib. 6. p. 683.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of ATHENS.

THE Republick of Athens, once the ſeat of learning and eloquence, the ſchool of arts and ſciences, and the center of wit, gaiety, and politeneſs, exhibits a ſtrong contraſt to that of Sparta, as well in her form of government, as in the genius and manners of her inhabitants.

The government of Athens, after the abolition of Monarchy, was truly democratick, and ſo much convulſed by thoſe civil diſſentions, which are the inevitable conſequences of that kind of government, that of all the Grecian ſtates, the Athenian may be the moſt ſtrictly termed the ſeat of faction. I obſerve that the hiſtory of this celebrated Republick is neither very clear nor intereſting till the time of Solon. The laws of Draco (the firſt legiſlator of the Athenians who gave his laws in writing) affixed death as the common puniſhment of the moſt capital crimes, or the moſt trivial offences; a circumſtance which implies either the moſt cruel auſterity in the temper of the lawgiver, or ſuch an abandoned profligacy in the manners of the people, as laid him under a neceſſity of applying ſuch violent remedies. As the hiſtorians have not clearly

clearly decided which of theſe was the caſe, I ſhall only remark, that the humanity of the people, ſo natural to the human ſpecies, was intereſted upon the occaſion, and the exceſſive rigour of the laws obſtructed the very means of their being carried into execution. A plain proof that a multiplicity of rigorous penal laws are not only incompatible with the liberty of a free ſtate, but even repugnant to human nature. For the natural equity of mankind can eaſily diſtinguiſh between the nature and degree of crimes; and the ſentiments of humanity will naturally be excited when the puniſhment ſeems to be too rigorous in proportion to the demerits of the offender. The chief reaſon, in my opinion, why ſo many offenders in our nation eſcape with impunity for want of proſecution, is becauſe our laws make no diſtinction, as to the puniſhment, between the moſt trifling robbery on the highway, and the moſt atrocious of all crimes, premeditated murder.

The remedy which Draco propoſed by his laws, proving worſe than the diſeaſe, the whole body of the people applied to Solon, as the only perſon equal to the difficult taſk of regulating their government. The ſupreme power of the ſtate was at that time veſted in nine magiſtrates, termed Archons or governors, elected annually by the people out of the body of the nobility. But the com-

community in general was ſplit into three factions, each contending for ſuch a form of government as was moſt agreeable to their different intereſts. The moſt ſenſible among the Athenians, dreading the conſequence of theſe diviſions, were willing, as Plutarch [1] informs us, to inveſt Solon with abſolute power; but our diſintereſted philoſopher was a ſtranger to that kind of ambition, and preferred the freedom and happineſs of his countrymen to the ſplendor of a Crown. He continued the Archons in their office as uſual, but limited their authority by inſtituting a ſenate of four hundred perſons elected by the people, by way of ballot, out of the four tribes into which the community was at that time divided. He revived and improved the ſenate and [2] court of Areopagus, the moſt ſacred and moſt reſpectable tribunal, not only of Greece, but of all which we ever read of in hiſtory. The integrity

[1] Vita Solon, p. 85. lit. D.

[2] The time of the firſt inſtitution of this court (ſo denominated from Ἄρειος πάγος, i. e. Hill of Mars, an eminence where they always aſſembled) is quite uncertain; nor are the hiſtorians at all agreed about the number of the members of which it was compoſed. However, this was the ſupreme court, which had cognizance of wilful murders, and all matters which were of the greateſt conſequence to the Republick. Suidas. They had alſo cognizance of all matters of religion, as we find by the inſtance of St. Paul.

and

and equity of this celebrated court was ſo remarkable, that not only the Greeks, but the Romans, ſometimes ſubmitted ſuch cauſes to their determination which they found too intricate and difficult for their own deciſion. To prevent all ſuſpicion of partiality either to plaintiff or defendant, this venerable court heard all cauſes and paſſed their definitive ſentence in the dark, and the pleaders on either ſide were ſtrictly confined to a bare repreſentation of the plain truth of the fact, without either aggravation or embelliſhment. For all the ornament of fine language, and thoſe powers of rhetorick which tended to bias the judgment by intereſting the paſſions of the judges, were abſolutely prohibited. Happy if the pleaders were reſtricted to this righteous method in our own courts of judicature, where great eloquence and great abilities are too often employed to confound truth and ſupport injuſtice!

It is evident from hiſtory that Solon at firſt propoſed the inſtitutions of Lycurgus as the model of his new eſtabliſhment. But the difficulty which he met with in the abolition of all debts, the firſt part of his ſcheme, convinced him of the utter impracticability of introducing the Laconic equality, and deterred him from all farther attempts of that nature. The laws of Athens gave the creditor ſo abſolute a power over his inſolvent debtor,

debtor, that he could not only oblige the unhappy wretch to do all his ſervile drudgery, but could ſell him and his children for ſlaves in default of payment. The creditors had made ſo oppreſſive an uſe of their power, that many of the citizens were actually obliged to ſell their children to make good their payments; and ſuch numbers had fled their country to avoid the effects of their deteſtable inhumanity, that, as [1] Plutarch obſerves, the city was almoſt unpeopled by the extortion of the uſurers. Solon, apprehenſive of an inſurrection amongſt the poorer citizens, who openly threatened to alter the government, and make an equal partition of the lands, thought no method ſo effectual to obviate this terrible evil, as to cancel all debts, as Lycurgus had done formerly at Sparta. But ſome of his friends, to whom he had privately communicated his ſcheme, with an aſſurance that he did not propoſe to meddle with the lands, were too well verſed in the art of jobbing to neglect ſo fair an opportunity of making a fortune. For they ſtretched their credit to the utmoſt in loans of large ſums from the moneyed men, which they immediately laid out in the purchaſe of landed eſtates. A precedent which the treacherous Ageſilaus copied too ſucceſsfully after-

[1] Plut. 85. lit. A.

wards

wards at Sparta. The cheat appeared as ſoon as the edict for aboliſhing all debts was made publick: but the odium of ſo flagitious a piece of roguery was thrown wholly upon Solon; as the cenſure of the publick for all frauds and exactions committed by officers in the inferior departments will naturally fall upon the miniſter at the helm, however diſintereſted and upright.

This edict was equally diſagreeable to the rich and to the poor. For the rich were violently deprived of all that part of their property which conſiſted in their loans, and the poor were diſappointed of that ſhare of the lands which they ſo greedily expected. How Solon drew himſelf out of this difficulty, hiſtorians have no where informed us. All we can learn from them is, that the decree was at laſt received and ſubmitted to, and that Solon was ſtill continued in his office with the ſame authority as before.

This experiment gave Solon a thorough inſight into the temper of his countrymen, and moſt probably induced him to accommodate his ſubſequent regulations to the humour and prejudices of the people. For as he wanted the authority which naturally ariſes from royal birth, as well as that which is founded on the unlimited confidence of the people, advantages which Lycurgus poſſeſſed in ſo eminent a degree, he was obliged to

to conſult rather what was practicable, than what was ſtrictly right; and endeavour, as far as he was able, to pleaſe all parties. That he acknowledged this, ſeems evident from his anſwer to one who aſked him [1] "Whether the laws he had given the Athenians "were the beſt he could poſſibly have "made?" "They are the beſt, replied Solon, which the Athenians are capable of "receiving." Thus whilſt he confined the Magiſtracies and the executive part of the Government ſolely to the rich, he lodged the ſupreme power in the hands of the poorer citizens. For though every freeman whoſe fortune did not amount to a particular cenſus or eſtimate, was excluded from all ſtate offices by the laws of Solon; yet he had a legal right of giving his opinion and ſuffrage in the Εκκλησια or aſſembly of the people, which was wholly compoſed of this inferior claſs of citizens. But as all elections, and all cauſes of appeal from the ſuperior courts, were determined by the voices of this aſſembly; as no law could paſs without their approbation, and the higheſt officers in the Republick were ſubject to their cenſure, this aſſembly became the *dernier reſort* in all cauſes, and this mob government, as it may be juſtly termed, was

[1] Plut. in Vit. Solon, p. 86. lit. C.

the

the great leading cauſe of the ruin of their Republick. Anacharſis the Scythian Philoſopher, who at that time reſided with Solon, juſtly ridiculed this exceſs of power which he had lodged in the people[1]. For when he had heard ſome points debated firſt in the Senate, and afterwards decided in the aſſembly of the people, he humourouſly told Solon, that at Athens "Wiſe men debated, "but fools decided." Solon was as ſenſible of this capital defect as Anacharſis; but he was too well acquainted with the licentiouſneſs and natural levity of the people, to diveſt them of a power, which he knew they would reſume by violence at the firſt opportunity. The utmoſt therefore he could do was to fix his two ſenates as the [2] moorings of the conſtitution: That of [3] four hundred, to ſecure the ſtate againſt the fluctuating temper and tumultuous fury of the people; that of the [4] Areopagus, to reſtrain the dangerous encroachments of the great and wealthy. He repealed all the laws of Draco, thoſe againſt murder alone excepted; rightly judging, as [5] Plutarch remarks, that it was not only moſt iniquitous, but moſt abſurd, to inflict the ſame puniſhment upon a man for being

[1] Plut. in Vit. Solon, p. 81. lit. B.
[2] Ibid. p. 88. lit. D.
[3] The new Senate, which he had inſtituted.
[4] Which he had revived. Vide Note p. 76.
[5] Ibid. p. 87. lit. E.

idle, or ſtealing a cabbage or an apple out of a garden, as for committing murder or ſacrilege. But as the account handed down to us of the laws which Solon eſtabliſhed is extremely lame and imperfect, I ſhall only mention the ſarcaſm of Anacharſis upon that occaſion, as a proof of their inſufficiency to anſwer that end for which Solon deſigned them. For that Philoſopher comparing the corrupt manners of the Athenians with the coercive power of Solon's laws, reſembled the latter to [1] cobwebs, which would entangle only the poor and feeble, but were eaſily broke through by the rich and powerful. Solon is ſaid to have replied, [2] "That men "would readily ſtand to thoſe mutual com- "pacts, which it was the intereſt of neither "party to violate; and that he had ſo rightly "adapted his laws to the reaſon of his "countrymen, as to convince them how "much more advantageous it was to adhere "to what was juſt, than to be guilty of in- "juſtice." The event, as Plutarch truly obſerves, proved more correſpondent to the opinion of Anacharſis, than to the hopes of Solon. For Piſiſtratus, a near relation of Solon's, having artfully formed a ſtrong party among the poorer citizens, by diſtributing bribes under the ſpecious pretence of

[1] Ibid. p. 81. lit. A.

[2] Ibid. p. 81.

re-

relieving their neceſſities, procured a guard of [1] fifty men armed with clubs only for the ſafety of his perſon, by the help of which he ſeized the citadel, aboliſhed the Democracy, and eſtabliſhed a ſingle tyranny in ſpite of all the efforts of Solon.

This uſurpation proved the ſource of endleſs faction, and brought innumerable calamities upon the republick. Piſiſtratus was expelled more than once by the oppoſite party, and as often brought back in triumph either by the fraud or force of his prevailing faction. At his death he left the kingdom to his two ſons Hipparchus and Hippias. The former of theſe was aſſaſſinated by Harmodius and Ariſtogiton for a perſonal injury they had received [2]; Hippias was ſoon after driven out of Athens by the Spartans, at the inſtigation of ſome of his diſcontented countrymen. Deſpairing of recovering his former ſovereignty by any other means, he fled to Darius for aſſiſtance, and was the cauſe of the firſt invaſion of Greece by the Perſians, in which he died fighting againſt his country in the ever memorable battle of Marathon. But the moſt fatal evil which reſulted from the uſurpation of Piſiſtratus,

[1] Solon in his letter to Epimenides, ſays 400, which ſeems moſt probable. Diog. Laert.

[2] Thucyd.

was, that perpetual fear of ſeeing the [1] ſupreme power again lodged in the hands of a ſingle perſon. For this fear kept the jealouſy of the people in a conſtant alarm, and threw them at laſt into the hands of the factious Demagogues. Hence [2] ſuperior merit was frequently repreſented as an unpardonable crime, and a kind of high treaſon againſt the Republick. And the real patriots were rendered ſuſpected to the people, juſt as the Demagogues were influenced by envy or private pique, or even bribed by ambitious or deſigning men, who aſpired at the very thing of which the others were unjuſtly accuſed. The hiſtory of Athens abounds with inſtances of the levity and inconſtancy of that unſteady people. For how frequently do we find [3] their beſt and ableſt citizens impriſoned or ſentenced to baniſhment by the oſtraciſm, in honour of whom the ſame people had juſt before erected ſtatues: nay not unfrequently raiſing ſtatues to the memory of thoſe [4] illuſtrious and innocent men, whom they had illegally doomed to death in the wantonneſs of their power;

[1] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 415. ſect. 60.

[2] Xenoph. de Republ. Athen. p. 55. Edit. Luvenel. Baſ. 1572.

[3] Miltiades, Themiſtocles, Ariſtides, Cimon, Thucydides the hiſtorian, &c.

[4] Socrates, Phocion, &c.

at

at once the monuments of their injuſtice and too late repentance! This evil was the natural conſequence of that capital error in Solon's polity, when he entruſted the ſupreme power to the giddy and fluctuating populace. A defect which (as I obſerved before) was the great leading cauſe of the loſs of that liberty which they had ſo licentiouſly abuſed. For as the removal of all the honeſt citizens either by death or baniſhment, paved an eaſy way for uſurpation and tyranny; ſo it was a meaſure invariably purſued, in the Democratick governments of Greece, by all thoſe ambitious men who aimed at ſubverting the liberties of their country. This truth is ſo clearly explained, and ſo inconteſtibly proved, by the great Thucydides, that whilſt I peruſe the annals of that admirable hiſtorian, I cannot help grieving over the tragick pages ſtained with the blood of ſo many patriot citizens, who fell a ſacrifice to the dire ambition and avarice of faction. What a ſtriking detail does he give us of the moſt calamitous ſituation of all the Grecian Republicks during the Peloponneſian war! How does he labour for expreſſion in his pathetick enumeration of the horrible conſequences of faction, after his deſcription of the deſtructive ſedition at Corcyra! A contempt of all religion, the open violation of the moſt ſacred ties and

compacts; devaſtations, maſſacres, aſſaſſinations, and all the ſavage horrors of civil diſcord inflamed even to madneſs, are the perpetual ſubjects of his inſtructive hiſtory. Calamities of which he himſelf was at once an eye-witneſs and a moſt faithful recorder.

[1] Thucydides truly aſcribes this deſtructive war to the mutual jealouſy which then ſubſiſted between the Spartans and Athenians [2]. The moſt ſtale frivolous pretences were trumped up by the Spartans, and as ſtrongly retorted by the Athenians. Both ſtates made the intereſts or grievances of their allies the conſtant pretext for their mutual altercations, whilſt the real cauſe was that ambitious ſcheme which each ſtate had formed, of reducing all Greece under its reſpective dominion. But an event which both ſtates ſeemed to have waited for quickly blew up the latent ſparks of jealouſy into the moſt violent flame [3]. The Thebans privately entered the city of Platea in the night (a ſmall ſtate at that time allied to Athens) which had been betrayed to them by a treacherous faction, who were enemies to the Athenians. But the honeſter part of the

[1] Thucyd. edit. Duker. lib. 1. p. 58. ſect. 88.
[2] Thucyd. lib. 1. p. 82. ſect. 127, 128.
[3] Thucyd. lib. 2. p. 98. ſect. 2, 3, 4, et ſequent.

Pla-

Platæans recovering from their ſurprize, and taking notice of the ſmall number of the Thebans, quickly regained poſſeſſion of their city by the ſlaughter of moſt of the invaders. The Platæans immediately applied to the [1] Athenians for aſſiſtance; the Thebans to the Spartans. Both ſtates entered eagerly into the quarrel between their reſpective allies, and engaged as principals in that deſtructive war which at laſt involved all Greece in the common calamity. Whereever the fortune of the Spartan prevailed, an oligarchical Ariſtocracy was eſtabliſhed, and the friends to a popular government deſtroyed or baniſhed. Where the Athenians were victors, Democracy was ſettled or reſtored, and the people glutted their revenge with the blood of the nobility. Alternate revolts, truces violated as ſoon as made, maſſacres, proſcriptions, and confiſcations, were the perpetual conſequences, in all the petty republicks, of the alternate good or bad ſucceſs of theſe two contending rivals. In a word, all Greece ſeems to have been ſeized with an epidemick madneſs; and the polite, the humane Grecians, treated one another, during the whole courſe of this unnatural war, with a ferocity unknown even to the moſt ſavage barbarians. The real cauſe, aſſigned by Thu-

[1] Thucid. lib. 2. p. 101, &c. ſect. 6.

cydides, of all theſe atrocious evils, was, " [1] The luſt of domination ariſing from " avarice and ambition:" for the leading men in every ſtate, whether of the Democratick or Ariſtocratick party, affected outwardly the greateſt concern for the welfare of the Republick, which in reality was made the prize for which they all contended. Thus, whilſt each endeavoured by every poſſible method to get the better of his antagoniſt, the moſt audacious villanies, and the moſt flagrant acts of injuſtice, were equally perpetrated by both ſides: [2] Whilſt the moderate men amongſt the citizens, who refuſed to join with either ſide, were alike the objects of their reſentment or envy, and equally deſtroyed without mercy by either faction.

Hiſtorians unanimouſly agree, that the Athenians were inſtigated to this fatal war by the celebrated Pericles. Thucydides, who was not only cotemporary with Pericles, but actually bore a command in that war, does real honour to that great man's character; [3] for he aſſigns his deſire of humbling the Spartans, and his zeal for the glory and

[1] Thucyd. Πάντων δ' αὐτῶν αἴτιον ἡ ἀρχὴ διὰ πλεονεξίαν καὶ φιλοτιμίαν. lib. 3. p. 218. ſect. 82.

[2] Τὰ δὲ μέσα τῶν πολιτῶν ὑπ' ἀμφοτέρων, ἢ ὅτι οὐ ξυνηγωνίζοντο, ἡ φθόνῳ περιεῖναι διεφθειροντο. Thucyd. p. 219.

[3] Thucyd. lib. 1. p. 91. ſect. 140.

intereſt

intereſt of his country, as the real motives of his conduct upon that occaſion. But, as a detail of this tedious and ruinous war is wholly foreign to my purpoſe, I ſhall only remark, that if ever union and harmony are neceſſary to the preſervation of a ſtate, they are more eſſentially ſo when that ſtate is engaged in a dubious war with a powerful enemy. For not only the continuation, but the event, of that long war, ſo fatal to the Athenians, muſt (humanly ſpeaking) be wholly attributed to the diſunion of their councils, and the perpetual fluctuation in their meaſures, occaſioned by the influence of the ambitious and factious Demagogues. Not the calamities of war, nor the moſt dreadful [1] plague, ever yet recorded in hiſtory, were able to fix the volatile temper of that unſteady people. Elate beyond meaſure with any good ſucceſs, they were deaf to the moſt reaſonable overtures of peace from their enemies, and their views were unbounded. Equally dejected with any defeat, they thought the enemy juſt at their doors, and threw the whole blame upon their commanders, who were always treated as unpardonably criminal when unſucceſsful. The Demagogues, who watched every turn of temper in that variable people, took care to adapt

[1] Thucyd. lib. 2. p. 127. ſect. 47. et ſeq.

every

every circumſtance that offered to their own ambitious views, either of gaining or ſupporting an aſcendancy in the ſtate, which kept up a perpetual ſpirit of faction in that unhappy Republick. Thus, in the beginning of the Peloponneſian war, Cleon, a noiſy ſeditious Demagogue, [1] declaimed violently againſt Pericles, and was the conſtant oppoſer of all his meaſures: but the firmneſs and ſuperior abilities of that great man enabled him to baffle all his antagoniſts. When Pericles was carried off by that fatal peſtilence which almoſt depopulated Athens, the nobility, jealous of that ſway which Cleon had acquired over the people, ſet up Nicias in oppoſition. Nicias was honeſt, and a real lover of his country, but a man of no great abilities; and though an experienced officer, yet cautious and diffident even to timidity. In his temper he was mild, humane, and averſe to bloodſhed, and laboured to put an end to a war which ſpread ſuch general deſtruction; but all his meaſures were oppoſed by the turbulent Cleon; for when the Spartans propoſed an accommodation, Cleon perſuaded the Athenians to inſiſt upon ſuch high terms that the treaty broke off, and war was again renewed with the ſame in-

[1] Plut. in Vit. Pericl. p. 171. lit. E.

[2] Plut. in Vit. Nic. p. 524. lit. B.

veterate

veterate fury: but the incendiary Cleon, the chief obſtacle of all pacifick meaſures, falling in battle in the tenth year of that war, negociations were again ſet on foot, and a peace for fifty years concluded between the Athenians and the Spartans by the unwearied endeavours of Nicias [1]. But whilſt Nicias was intent upon the enjoyment of that repoſe which he had procured, a new and infinitely more formidable rival ſtarted up, and again involved his country and all Greece in the ſame calamities by his reſtleſs and inſatiable ambition.

Alcibiades now appeared upon the ſtage; a [2] man compoſed of a motley mixture of virtues and vices, of good and bad qualities; one who could aſſume even the moſt oppoſite characters; and with more eaſe than a chamæleon can change its colours, appear a very contraſt to himſelf, juſt as his intereſt or ambition required. This State-Proteus was ſtrongly piqued at the growing power and reputation of Nicias. His luſt [3] of power was too great to bear either a ſuperior or an equal; and he determined at all events to ſupplant him, alike regardleſs either of the

[1] Hence, as Plutarch informs us, it was termed the Nician peace, lib. 5.

[2] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 200. lit. B.

[3] Plut. Vit. Alcib. p. 197. lit. C.

equity

equity of the means, or of the conſequences of it to his country. The Athenians were not a little diſpleaſed with the Spartans, who [1] had not been very punctual in fulfilling the conditions of the treaty. Alcibiades finding his countrymen in a humour very proper for his purpoſe, inflamed them violently againſt Nicias, whom he publickly accuſed as a ſecret friend and well-wiſher to that people. Nicias endeavoured to ward off the blow, and prevent his countrymen from coming to an open rupture; but the intrigues of Alcibiades prevailed, who [2] procured himſelf to be elected General, and freſh hoſtilities to be commenced againſt the allies of Sparta.

The 17th year of this memorable war is remarkable for that fatal expedition againſt Sicily, which gave a mortal blow to the Athenian grandeur, and affords a ſignal inſtance of the terrible conſequences of faction. The Egeſtians, a ſmall ſtate in Sicily, applied to the Athenians for aſſiſtance againſt the oppreſſions of the Syracuſans. Alcibiades, looking upon it as an object worthy of his ambition, undertook the cauſe of theſe ſuppliants, and knew ſo well how to flatter the vanity of his countrymen, that a large [3]

[1] Thucyd. lib. 5. p. 339. ſect. 35, 42.

[2] Thucyd. lib. 5. p. 350. ſect. 52.

[3] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 383. ſect. 8.

arma-

armament was decreed by the people for that purpoſe, and Nicias, Alcibiades, and Lamachus, a daring but able officer, were elected generals. Nicias was the only perſon who had the honeſty or courage to oppoſe a meaſure which he judged not only raſh, but to the laſt degree impolitick; but the Athenians were deaf to all his remonſtrances. The relief of the Egeſtians was only the pretext; for the entire dominion of Sicily, as Thucydides [1] aſſures us, was the real object they had in view when they gave orders for that powerful armament. Alcibiades had promiſed them an eaſy conqueſt of that iſland, which he looked upon only as a prelude to much greater enterprizes; and the beſotted people [2] had already ſwallowed up Italy, Carthage, and Africa, in their idle imaginations. Both factions concurred in the vigorous proſecution of this meaſure, though from very different motives: the friends of Alcibiades, from the view of aggrandizing their chief by that vaſt acceſſion of wealth and glory which they hoped for from this expedition: [3] his enemies, from the hopes of ſupplanting him in his abſence, and gaining

[1] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 381. ſect. 6.

[2] Plut. in Vita Alcibid. Item Thucyd. in orat. Alcib. ad Lacedæm. lib. 6. p. 436. ſect. 90.

[3] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 395, 396. ſect. 28, 29.

ve

the lead in the adminiſtration. Thus the true intereſt of the ſtate was equally ſacrificed to the ſelfiſh and private views of each party! But, in the midſt of theſe vaſt preparations, an odd accident threw the whole city into confuſion, and at once alarmed the ſuperſtition and jealouſy of the people. The [1] Terms, or ſtatues of Mercury were all defaced in one and the ſame night by ſome unknown perſons; nor could the Athenians ever diſcover the real authors of this reputed ſacrilege. Proclamations were iſſued with a free pardon, and reward for any of the accomplices who could make a diſcovery, and the information of ſtrangers and ſlaves was allowed as legal evidence; but no information could be procured as to the true authors of that particular fact; a circumſtance which to me does not appear at all ſurprizing: for it was evidently, in my opinion, a piece of party-craft played off againſt Alcibiades by the oppoſite faction, who knew that to [2] attack the eſtabliſhed religion, was to touch the maſter-ſpring of the paſſions of their countrymen. Some ſlaves indeed, and other low

[1] Thucyd. The Terms were ſtatues of Mercury, placed at the doors of their houſes, made of ſquare ſtones of a cubical form.

[2] A ſimilar meaſure was taken in the latter end of Queen Anne's reign.

per-

perſons (ſuborned, as [1] Plutarch aſſerts, by Androcles, one of the Demagogues) depoſed, that long before that, ſome ſtatues had been mutilated, and the moſt ſacred myſteries of their religion ridiculed, in a drunken frolick by ſome young wild fellows, and that [2] Alcibiades was of the party. This information, which, according to Plutarch, was a palpable contrivance of his enemies, enabled them to fix the odium of the laſt action upon Alcibiades [3]. The Demagogues of the oppoſite faction greatly exaggerated the whole affair to the people. They accuſed him of a treaſonable deſign againſt the popular government, and produced his contemptuous ridicule of the ſacred myſteries, and the mutilation of Mercury's ſtatues, in ſupport of their charge; as they urged his well-known libertiniſm, and licentious life as a proof that he muſt be the author of thoſe inſults upon their religion. [4] Alcibiades not only denied the charge, but inſiſted upon being brought immediately to a legal trial; declaring himſelf ready to undergo the puniſhment inflicted by the laws, if he ſhould be found guilty. He beſeeched the people not to re-

[1] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 200. lit. D.

[2] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 395. ſect. 28.

[3] Thucyd. ibid.

[4] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 29. paſſim.

ceive any informations againſt him in his abſence, but rather to put him to death upon the ſpot if they judged him to be the offender. He urged too, how impolitick it would be to ſend him with the command of ſo great an army, whilſt he lay under the imputation of a crime of that nature, before they had taken thorough cognizance of the affair: but his accuſers dreading the effect which his intereſt with the army, and his well-known influence over the allied troops, which had engaged in the expedition from their perſonal attachment to him, might have upon the people, if he ſhould be brought to immediate trial, procured other Demagogues of their party to diſſuade the people from a meaſure which they judged would diſconcert their ſcheme. Theſe men pleaded the dangerous delay which ſuch a proceeding might occaſion, and urged the neceſſity of diſpatch in an enterprize of ſuch vaſt importance. They [1] propoſed therefore that the fleet ſhould ſail immediately, but that Alcibiades ſhould return when a day was appointed for his trial. For their intention was, as Thucydides remarks, to recall and bring him to his trial when the popular prejudice run ſtrong againſt him, which they knew they could eaſily ſpirit up in his ab-

[1] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 395. ſect. 23. ad finem.

ſence.

ſence. It was decreed therefore that Alcibiades ſhould depart immediately upon the expedition.

[1] This mighty armament, which carried the flower of the Athenian forces, was the moſt ſplendid, the beſt fitted out, and the moſt expenſive, that had ever ſailed from any of the Grecian ports to that very time. [2] But the firſt thing we meet with in this expedition, was (what might naturally be expected) a diſagreement between the three Generals as to the manner of beginning their operations. Alcibiades indeed brought them both over to his opinion; but whilſt he was diſputing with his colleagues in Sicily, his enemies at Athens were by no means idle. The affair of the ſtatues, and the pollution of the ſacred myſteries, were again brought upon the carpet. The [3] people, naturally ſuſpicious, never enquired into the character of the informers, or the validity of the evidence, but admitted all that offered without diſtinction; and, giving eaſy credit to the moſt abandoned wretches, apprehended ſeveral of the moſt eminent citizens, and committed them to priſon. [4] One of theſe per-

[1] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 396. ſect. 31.
[2] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 408. ſect. 47, 48, 49.
[3] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 411. ſect. 53.
[4] Ibid. p. 415. ſect. 60.

ſuaded another of his fellow-priſoners, who was moſt liable to ſuſpicion, to take the crime upon himſelf, and to impeach ſome others as his accomplices: urging this as a reaſon, that whether what he confeſſed ſhould be true or falſe, he would at leaſt ſecure his own pardon, and calm the preſent ſuſpicions of the people. [1] Audocides, for that was the name of this perſon according to Plutarch, though it is omitted by Thucydides, was prevailed upon by this kind of reaſoning to acknowledge himſelf guilty of defacing the ſtatues, and to inform againſt ſome others as accomplices in the ſame act of impiety. Upon this declaration [2] the informer received his pardon, and all thoſe who were not mentioned in his information, their liberty: but proceſſes were made out againſt as many as he had named; and all who were apprehended were tried, condemned, and executed upon his ſingle evidence. Thoſe who eſcaped by flight were ſentenced to die, and a price ſet upon their heads by a publick proclamation. Whether the perſons condemned were guilty or innocent was not at all clear, according to Thucydides. [3] Plutarch tells us, that the friends and acquaintance of Alcibiades,

[1] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 202.
[2] Thucyd. p. 416. ſect. 60.
[3] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 201. lit. C.

who

who fell into the hands of the people, were ſeverely handled on this occaſion. It is certain therefore that the information was chiefly levelled at him by the artifice of the oppoſite faction: for [1] Thucydides informs us almoſt in the very next ſentence, that the people received the information againſt Alcibiades with all the fury of prejudice, at the inſtigation of ſuch of his enemies as had accuſed him before he ſailed upon the expedition. And ſince they now had not the leaſt doubt of his being concerned in the affair of defacing the ſtatues, they were more than ever convinced that he was equally guilty of the pollution of the myſteries, and that both thoſe crimes were committed by him and his aſſociates with the ſame deſign of ſubverting the popular government. For a body of Spartan troops happened to make an excurſion, in that very juncture, as far as the Iſthmus, upon ſome deſign or other againſt the Bœotians. [2] This unlucky incident confirmed the people in their ſuſpicions that this was a ſcheme concerted before-hand with Alcibiades, covered with the ſpecious pretext of attacking the Bœotians; and that if the plot had not been happily [3] diſcovered

[1] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 416. ſect. 61.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

in time, and the execution of it prevented by the death of the conſpirators, their city would moſt inevitably have been betrayed to the Spartans. Thus on every ſide ſuſpicions fell ſtrongly upon Alcibiades, and the people determining to put him to death, ſent a private expreſs to Sicily to recall him and ſuch of his friends as were named in the information. The officers diſpatched in the Salaminian [1] galley, which was ſent on that occaſion, were ordered to acquaint Alcibiades, that he was deſired to return with them to Athens to clear himſelf of thoſe things which were objected to him before the people; but they received a ſtrict charge not to offer to take him or his friends into cuſtody; not only from the dread of ſome mutiny amongſt their own ſoldiers upon his account, but for fear the allied troops, whom his influence had engaged, ſhould deſert and abandon the enterprize. [2] Alcibiades obeyed the ſummons, and taking his friends, who were included in the information, into his own ſhip, left Sicily in company with the Salaminian galley, ſeemingly as if returning to Athens; but, whether he only ſuſpected, or, which is more probable, had

[1] This veſſel may properly be termed the Athenian State-pacquet boat, and was never ſent out but upon very extraordinary occaſions. Plut.

[2] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 417. ſect. 61.

received intelligence of the meaſures taken by his enemies in his abſence, he, with his friends, went aſhore at Thuria, and gave the Athenian officers the ſlip, not caring to ſtand the ſentence of the credulous and prejudiced people. The officers, finding all their ſearch after him quite fruitleſs, returned to Athens without him, and the Athenians paſſed ſentence of death upon him and all thoſe who accompanied him, [1] and confiſcated their eſtates for non-appearance. Thus, inſtead of uniting their joint efforts to promote the ſucceſs of an enterprize upon which they had ſtaked their All, the infatuated Athenians were intent upon nothing but the cabals and intrigues of faction; and the folly of the people, managed by their ambitious and ſelfiſh Demagogues, deprived the ſtate of the only commander from whom they could rationally hope for ſucceſs in that hazardous expedition. A meaſure which occaſioned the total ruin both of their fleet and army, and gave a fatal ſhock to their Republick; [2] for the ſoldiers were not only greatly diſpirited at the loſs of a chief, in whoſe abilities they placed the moſt entire confidence, but Alcibiades, in revenge for his uſage, took refuge amongſt the Spartans, and prevailed upon

[1] Thucyd. ibid.

[2] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 202.

them to ſend ſuch ſupplies to the Syracuſans as compleated the deſtruction of the Athenians in that country. Nicias was taken and put to death by the enemy; not a ſingle ſhip returned, and [1] few of the men eſcaped either ſlaughter or captivity. The [2] news of this terrible defeat threw the city into the utmoſt conſternation. They at firſt gave up all hopes, and imagined they ſhould quickly ſee the enemies fleet in the Pyræum whilſt they were in this exhauſted and defenceleſs condition. However, the dread of the impending danger had this good effect, that it made the [3] populace extremely tractable, and ready to ſupport their magiſtrates in whatever meaſures they judged moſt conducive to the common ſafety. Nor could any thing but union and harmony amongſt themſelves have poſſibly ſaved them in the midſt of ſo many enemies, with which they were ſurrounded. For all the Greeks in general were highly elated, as Thucydides tells [4] us, with the ill ſucceſs of the Athenians in Sicily. Thoſe who had hitherto obſerved a ſtrict neutrality in this war wanted no ſolicitations to join in cruſhing that unhappy people, but rather thought it glorious to have a ſhare in a

[1] Thucyd. lib. 7. p. 505. ad finem.
[2] Thucyd. lib. 8. p. 506, &c.
[3] Thucyd. ibid. p. 507.
[4] Thucyd. ibid. p. 508. ſect. 2.

war

war which they concluded would be but of ſhort duration. The Spartan allies were more than ever deſirous of delivering themſelves from the calamities of war which they had ſo long ſuffered; whilſt thoſe ſtates, which till that time had received laws from the Athenians, exerted themſelves above their ſtrength to ſupport the revolt which they were then meditating. They judged of the ſituation of affairs from the blind impulſe of paſſion, regardleſs of the dictates of reaſon, and fancied the next campaign would finiſh the ruin of the Athenians. [1] The Spartans, promiſing themſelves the certain dominion over all Greece, if the Athenians were once reduced, made vaſt preparations for the war, to which all their allies contributed their utmoſt; all got ready for opening the campaign the ſpring following.

The [2] Athenians, now harmony was reſtored to the ſtate, recovered their ſpirits, and begun to act with vigour. They applied themſelves to the re-eſtabliſhment of their marine, the repairs of their fortifications, and the care of ſtoring their magazines with the greateſt diligence and œconomy, retrenching all ſuch expences as they judged uſeleſs or ſuperfluous. The good effects of this un-

[1] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 2—3.
[2] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 4.

animity were viſible when the campaign opened, for they found themſelves in a condition to make head againſt their numerous enemies, though ſtrengthened by a new alliance with the Perſians, and aſſiſted with Perſian money; and they even gained ſome conſiderable advantages. An event too happened, which greatly diſconcerted the meaſures of their enemies, and raiſed their ſtate once more to its former power and luſtre. Alcibiades, a thorough libertine, who never ſtuck at the moſt infamous means of gratifying his paſſions, [1] debauched Timæa, the wife of Agis, King of Sparta, his great friend and protector. [2] Dreading the reſentment of that prince for ſo ſhameful a breach of friendſhip and hoſpitality, as well as the jealouſy of the Peloponneſians, who had ſent private orders to Aſtyochus, the Lacedemonian Admiral, to cut him off, he fled to Tiſſaphernes, at that time Governor of the provinces in the Lower Aſia under the Perſian Monarch. [3] Alcibiades, who was a conſummate maſter in the art of addreſs, quickly inſinuated himſelf into his good graces, and explained to him the true intereſt of the Perſians with reſpect to the Grecian

[1] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 203.
[2] Thucyd. lib. 8. p. 531. ſect. 45.
[3] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 46.

Re-

Republicks. He ſhewed him the bad policy of raiſing one ſtate to a ſuperiority over all the reſt, which would deprive his maſter of all his allies, and oblige him to contend alone with the whole power of Greece. He adviſed him to permit every ſtate to enjoy its own ſeparate independent government; and demonſtrated, that by keeping them thus divided, his maſter might ſet them together by the ears, and, by playing them one againſt another, cruſh them all at laſt without the leaſt danger. He added too, that an alliance with the Athenians would be more advantageous to the Perſian intereſt, and preferable to that which he had made with the Lacedemonians. The crafty Perſian was too able a politician not to reliſh his advice; he paid the Peloponneſians their ſubſidy ſo ill, and put off a naval engagement ſo long, under pretence of waiting for the Phænician fleet, [1] that he waſted the ſtrength of their navy, which was far ſuperior to the Athenian, and ruined all their meaſures.

Whilſt [2] Alcibiades reſided with Tiſſaphernes, and gave the Perſians the beſt inſtructions he could for regulating their conduct, he at the ſame time formed a ſcheme for procuring the repeal of his ſentence, and

[1] Thucyd. ibid.

[2] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 47.

liberty

liberty to return once more to his native country. He judged the beſt way to obtain this favour would be to convince the Athenians of his intimacy with Tiſſaphernes. To effect this, he wrote to the chief officers of the Athenian forces, which then lay at Samos, directing them to inform all thoſe of the greateſt weight and authority how deſirous he was of reviſiting Athens, if the government ſhould be once lodged in the hands of a ſmall number of the principal citizens; but that he could by no means think of returning whilſt the Democracy ſubſiſted, and the State was governed by a parcel of abandoned wretches, who had ſo ſcandalouſly driven him out of his country. Upon that condition he promiſed to procure the friendſhip of Tiſſaphernes, and declared himſelf ready to accept a ſhare with them in the adminiſtration. The event anſwered his expectations; for the officers and the leading men, both of the ſea and land forces, which were at Samos, were eagerly bent upon ſubverting the Democracy. [1] Thus the treaty was ſet on foot at Samos, and the ſcheme laid for altering the government. The principal men were in hopes of a ſhare in the adminiſtration, and the inferior people acquieſced from the expectation of large ſubſidies from the

[1] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 48.

Per-

Perſians. Phrynicus, one of the Generals, alone oppoſed it, ſenſible that Alcibiades cared as little for an Ariſtocratick government, as for a Democracy, and had no other point in view (which, as Thucydides acknowledges, was the real truth) than to procure ſuch a change in the preſent adminiſtration as might enable his friends to recall him. [1] The terms however, which Alcibiades offered, were agreed to by the reſt, and Piſander, one of the leading men, was ſent to Athens to manage the affair.

[2] Piſander at firſt met with violent oppoſition from the people; and the enemies of Alcibiades in particular clamoured loudly againſt the violation of the laws, when his return was propoſed, which they chiefly dreaded. But [3] Piſander applied ſo artfully to the fears of the people, and ſhewed them ſo plainly that it was the only reſource they had left which could poſſibly ſave the ſtate, that they at laſt agreed to it, though with great reluctance. He therefore, with ten others, was appointed to ſettle the affair with Tiſſaphernes and Alcibiades, as they ſhould judge moſt conducive to the intereſt of the Repub-

[1] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 49.

[2] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 53.

[3] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 54.

lick;

lick; but [1] Tiſſaphernes, who dreaded the power of the Peloponneſians, was not ſo ready to enter into a convention with the Athenians, as they were taught to believe. Alcibiades therefore, to ſave his credit, and conceal from the Athenians his inability to make good what he had promiſed, inſiſted, in the name of Tiſſaphernes, upon ſuch high terms that the treaty broke off, and the deputies returned to Samos, enraged at the trick which they thought had been put upon them by Alcibiades. Determined however, at all events, to purſue their ſcheme, Piſander, with ſome of the deputies, returned to Athens, where [2] their party had already made a conſiderable progreſs; for they had privately aſſaſſinated ſuch of the leading men as were averſe to an Ariſtocracy; and though they permitted the ſenate and people to aſſemble and vote as uſual, yet they would not allow any thing to be decreed but what they thought proper: [3] beſides, none but thoſe of their own faction durſt venture to harangue the people; for if any one attempted to ſpeak in oppoſition, he was ſure to be diſpatched the firſt convenient opportu-

[1] Thucyd. ibid. ſect. 56.
[2] Thucyd. ibid. 65.
[3] Thucyd. ibid. 66.

nity;

nity; nor was any enquiry made after the aſſaſſins, or any proceſs iſſued out againſt thoſe who were ſtrongly ſuſpected of the murders. The people were ſo terrified with theſe bloody executions, that they acquieſced to whatever was propoſed, and every man thought himſelf happy if no violence was offered him, even though he continued quiet and ſilent. They were deprived even of the power of bewailing the common calamity to each other, in order to concert meaſures for revenge: for the faction had artfully ſpread ſo ſtrong and ſo univerſal a diffidence amongſt the popular party, that no one durſt venture to confide in his neighbour, but each man ſuſpected every other as an accomplice of the crimes which were daily perpetrated.

[1] In this ſituation Piſander found the city at his arrival, and immediately prepared to finiſh what his friends had ſo ſucceſsfully begun: convoking therefore an aſſembly of the people, the Ariſtocratick faction openly declared their reſolution to aboliſh the antient form of government, and to lodge the ſupreme power in the hands of four hundred of the nobility, who ſhould govern the State in the manner they thought beſt, with the power of aſſembling five thouſand of the citi-

[1] Thucyd. ibid. p. 67.

zens

zens to conſult with as oft as they thought proper. [1] Piſander was the man who acquainted the people with this definitive reſolution; but Antiphon was the perſon who formed the plan, and was chief manager of the whole affair: a man, according to the teſtimony of Thucydides, who knew him perſonally, maſter of the greateſt abilities, and of by far the moſt nervous eloquence of any of his cotemporaries. Thus the Oligarchy was eſtabliſhed, and the Athenians deprived of that liberty which they had enjoyed near an hundred years from the expulſion of Hippias: during which whole ſpace they had been ſubject to none, but had been accuſtomed, above half that time, to lord it over others; [2] for as ſoon as this decree had paſſed in the aſſembly without oppoſition, the chiefs of the conſpiracy artfully permitted ſuch citizens as were upon duty, but had not been let into the ſecret, to go wherever they pleaſed; but directed their own friends to continue under arms, and diſpoſed them in ſuch a manner as might beſt favour their enterprize: for the Athenians kept at that time a conſtant guard upon their walls, as the Spartan army was encamped in their neighbourhood. When they had made their diſpoſition, the four

[1] Thucyd. ibid. 68.

[2] Thucyd. ibid. 69.

hun-

hundred Nobles with poignards concealed under their habits, and attended by an hundred and twenty daring young fellows, whom they employed in their aſſaſſinations, ſurrounded the [1] Senators, and paying them what was due upon their ſalaries, commanded them to depart the court. [2] The Senators tamely ſubmitted, and not the leaſt ſtir happening amongſt the citizens, they proceeded to elect magiſtrates out of their own body, and performed all the religious ceremonies uſually practiſed upon thoſe occaſions. When they had thus got poſſeſſion of the government, they did not think proper to recall thoſe whom the people had formerly baniſhed, for fear of being obliged to include Alcibiades in the number, whoſe enterpriſing genius they dreaded extremely; but they behaved moſt tyrannically to the citizens, putting ſome to death, throwing ſome into priſon, and baniſhing others.

The ſpirit of liberty however is not ſo eaſily extinguiſhed. [3] Piſander had brought mercenary troops with him out of ſome of the cities which he paſſed through on his return to Athens, who were of great ſervice to the new Governors in their enterprize: but the forces at Samos conſiſted of Athenian ci-

[1] Solon's new ſenate of four hundred.

[2] Thucyd. ibid. 70.

[3] Thucyd. lib. 8. p. 543. ſect. 65.

tizens,

tizens, jealous even of the leaſt attempt upon the liberty of their country, and declared enemies to every ſpecies of tyranny. The firſt news which theſe brave fellows received of the uſurpation, brought ſuch exaggerated accounts of the cruelty and inſolence of the four hundred, that they were with great difficulty reſtrained from cutting every one to pieces who was in the intereſt of the Oligarchy. [1] However, they took the command from their former Generals, and caſhiered every officer they ſuſpected, ſubſtituting others in their places; the chief of whom were Thraſybulus and Thraſyllus. Alcibiades [2] was recalled, and unanimouſly declared their Captain General both by the ſea and land forces; which gave ſuch a turn to affairs at Athens, that the four hundred were depoſed, in ſpite of all their efforts to continue in power, and the publick tranquillity once more eſtabliſhed.

The [3] people confirmed Alcibiades in the command, and committed the whole management of the war to his conduct. [4] But his ſoul was too great to receive his recall from baniſhment, and even his high poſt as

[1] Thucyd. lib. 8. p. 551. ſect. 76.
[2] Thucyd. ibid. p. 553. ſect. 81.
[3] Thucyd. ibid. p. 567. ſect. 97.
[4] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 206.

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an act of favour. He determined to merit both by ſome ſignal ſervice, and not to reviſit Athens 'till he could return with glory. [1] His uſual ſucceſs attended him in this war, and he ſeemed to bring victory with him wherever he appeared; for he gained ſo many victories both by ſea and land, and diſtreſſed the Peloponneſians ſo much by his addreſs and conduct, that he once more retrieved the dominion of the ſea, and returned triumphant to Athens. His [2] entry was ſplendidly magnificent, adorned with the trophies of two hundred ſhips of war, which he had deſtroyed or taken, and a vaſt number of priſoners. His reception was attended with all the honours and applauſe he had ſo juſtly merited. The people, conſcious of the late happy change in their affairs under the adminiſtration of Alcibiades, lamented with tears their miſcarriage in Sicily, and other ſubſequent calamities; all which they imputed to their own fatal error in not truſting the ſole command to ſo able and ſucceſsful a commander.

The fortune however of this great man was perpetually fluctuating, and ſeemed to be ever on the extreme; and [3] Plutarch re-

[1] Plut. ibid. p. 207, 208.
[2] Plut. ibid. p. 209.
[3] Ibid. p. 211.

marks, that if ever man owed his ruin to his own glory, it muſt be Alcibiades; for the people were ſo prepoſſeſſed with the opinion of his courage and conduct, that they looked upon him as abſolutely invincible. Whenever therefore he failed in any one point, they imputed it entirely to his neglect, or want of will; for they could imagine nothing ſo difficult, but what they thought him able to ſurmount, if he applied to it with earneſtneſs and vigour. Thus, in the ſame campaign, he ſailed to the iſle of Andros with a powerful fleet, where he defeated the joint forces of the inhabitants and Spartans; but, as he did not take the city, he gave his enemies a freſh handle for renewing their uſual accuſations; for the people already fancied themſelves maſters of Chios and the reſt of Ionia, and were extremely out of humour becauſe his conqueſts did not keep pace with their heated imaginations. They made no allowance for the wretched ſtate of their finances, which frequently obliged him to quit his army to go in ſearch of money to pay, and proviſions to ſubſiſt, his forces, whilſt their enemies had a conſtant reſource for all their wants in the treaſures of Perſia. To one of theſe excurſions, which neceſſity obliged him to make in order to raiſe money, he properly owed his ruin: for leaving the command of the fleet to one Antiochus, an able ſeaman indeed,

indeed, but raſh, and in every other reſpect unequal to ſuch a charge, he gave him the moſt poſitive orders not to fight the enemy upon any account whatſoever during his abſence; but the vain Antiochus treated his orders with ſo much contempt, that he ſailed out with a few ſhips to brave the Spartan admiral Lyſander, which brought on a general engagement. The event was, the death of Antiochus, the defeat of the Athenians, who loſt many of their ſhips, and a trophy erected by the Spartans in honour of their victory. Alcibiades, at the firſt news of this misfortune, returned to Samos with precipitation, and endeavoured to bring Lyſander to a deciſive action; but the wary Spartan knew too well how different a man he had now to deal with, and would by no means hazard a ſecond engagement.

In the mean time one [1] Thraſybulus, who bore a mortal enmity to Alcibiades, poſted to Athens, and impeached him as the cauſe of the late defeat, affirming that he committed the care of the fleet to his pot companions, whilſt he rambled at pleaſure amongſt the provinces, raiſing money, and living in a ſtate of riot and diſſipation with wine and women.

[1] The ſon of Thraſon; the other of that name is called by Thucydides, the ſon of Lycus. Thucyd. lib. 8. p. 549. ſect. 75.

A violent charge, beſides, was brought againſt him for fortifying a place near Bizanthe [1], as a retreat upon occaſion, which his enemies urged as a proof that he either was not able, or not willing, to reſide in his native country.

Jealouſy and inconſtancy were the characteriſticks of the Athenian people. They gave implicit belief to the ſuggeſtions of his enemies, and diſcharged, as Plutarch tells us, the fury of their gall upon the unfortunate Alcibiades, whom they deprived immediately of the command.

[2] Thucydides, ſpeaking of the behaviour of his countrymen to Alcibiades upon the impeachment brought againſt him for defacing the ſtatues, imputes their ruin to that jealouſy which they conſtantly harboured both of his ambition and abilities. For though he had done the State many great and ſignal ſervices, yet his way of life made him ſo odious to every individual, that the command was taken from him, and given to others, which not long after drew on the deſtruction of the Republick.

For [3] Tydeus, Menander, and Adimantus, the new Generals, who lay with the Athenian fleet in the river Ægos, were ſo

[1] A city in Thrace.

[2] Thucyd. lib. 6. p. 387. ſect. 15.

[3] Plut. in Vit. Alcib. p. 211, 212.

weak

weak as to ſail out every morning at day-break to defy Lyſander, who kept his ſtation at Lampſacus; and, at their return from this idle bravado, ſpent the reſt of the day without order or diſcipline, or keeping any look-out, from an affected contempt of the enemy. Alcibiades, who was at that time in the neighbourhood, and thoroughly ſenſible of their danger, came and informed them of the inconveniences of the place where their fleet then lay, and the abſurdity of ſuffering their men to go aſhore and ramble about the country. He aſſured them too, that Lyſander was an experienced and vigilant enemy, who knew how to make the moſt of every advantage: but they, vain of their new power, deſpiſed his advice, and treated him with the utmoſt rudeneſs. Tydeus, in particular, ordered him to be gone; and told him inſolently, that not he, but they were now commanders, and knew beſt what to do. The event happened as Alcibiades had foreſeen. Lyſander attacked them unexpectedly whilſt they lay in their uſual diſorder, and gained ſo compleat a victory, that of all their fleet eight veſſels alone eſcaped, which fled at the firſt onſet. The able Spartan, who knew as well how to make uſe of, as to gain, a victory, ſoon after compelled Athens itſelf to ſurrender at diſcretion. As ſoon [1] as he was

[1] Plut. in Vit. Lyſand. p. 441.

maſter of the city, he burnt all their ſhipping, placed a garriſon in their citadel, and demoliſhed the reſt of their fortifications. When he had thus reduced them to a ſtate of abſolute ſubjection, he aboliſhed their conſtitution, and left them to the mercy of thirty governors of his own chuſing, well known in hiſtory by the appellation of the Thirty Tyrants.

This tyranny, though of very ſhort duration, was to the laſt degree inhuman. The tyrants ſacrificed all whom they ſuſpected to their fear, and all who were rich to their avarice. The carnage was ſo great, that, according to [1] Xenophon, the Thirty put more Athenians to death in eight months only, than had fallen in battle, againſt the whole force of the Peloponneſians, during ten years of the war. But the publick virtue of Thraſybulus [2] could not bear to ſee his country enſlaved by ſuch inhuman monſters: collecting therefore about ſeventy determined citizens, who, like him, had fled to Thebes for refuge, he firſt ſeized upon [3] Phyle, a

[1] Τριάκοντα πλήθος ἀπεκτόνασιν Ἀθηναίων ἐν ὀκτω μησὶν, ἢ πάντες Πελοπόννησιοι δέκα ἔτη πολεμῶντες. Xenoph. Hellenic. lib. 2. p. 370. Edit. Lewencl. Baſil.

[2] Moſt probably the ſon of Lycus, mentioned by Thucydides, who had ſo great a ſhare in depoſing the Four Hundred, and reſtoring the ancient conſtitution.

[3] Xenoph. ibid. p. 367.

ſtrong

ſtrong fort near Athens; and, ſtrengthened by the acceſſion of freſh numbers, which flocked in to him from every ſide, he got [1] poſſeſſion of the Pyræum. The Thirty Tyrants endeavoured to retake it, but were repulſed, and [2] Critias and Hippomachus, two of their number, ſlain in the attempt. The people now, weary of the Tyrants [3], drove them out of the city, and choſe ten magiſtrates, one out of each tribe, to ſupply their places. The Tyrants applied to their friend Lyſander, who ſailed and inveſted the Pyræum, and reduced Thraſybulus, and his party, to an extreme want of neceſſaries; for they were yet confined to the Pyræum, as the people, though they had depoſed the Tyrants, yet refuſed to receive them into the city; [4] but Pauſanias, one of the Kings of Sparta, who commanded the land forces in this expedition, jealous of the reputation which that great man had acquired, gained over two of the Ephori, who accompanied him, and granted peace to the Athenians, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition of Lyſander. Pauſanias returned to Sparta with his army, and the [5] Tyrants, deſpairing of aſſiſt-

[1] Xenoph. ibid. p. 368.
[2] Xenoph. ibid. 370.
[3] Xenoph. ibid. 371.
[4] Xenoph. ibid. 372—373.
[5] Xenoph. ibid. p. 375.

ance, began to hire foreign troops, and were determined to re-eſtabliſh themſelves by force in that power of which they had been ſo lately deprived. But Thraſybulus, informed of their deſign, marched out with all his forces, and, drawing them to a parley, puniſhed them with that death their crimes ſo juſtly merited. After the execution of the Tyrants, Thraſybulus proclaimed a general act of indemnity and oblivion, and by that ſalutary meaſure reſtored peace and liberty to his country without farther bloodſhed.

The concluſion of the Peloponneſian war may properly be termed the period of the Athenian grandeur; for though, by the aſſiſtance of the Perſians, they made ſome figure after that time, yet it was but of ſhort duration. The manners of the people were greatly degenerated, and the extreme ſcarcity of virtuous characters, ſo viſible in their ſubſequent hiſtory, marks at once the progreſs and the degree of their degeneracy. Conon, who eſcaped with eight ſhips only when they were ſo totally defeated by Lyſander, had convinced the Perſian Monarch how much his intereſt was concerned in ſupporting the Athenians, and obtained the command of a powerful armament in their favour: whilſt the artful [1] Tithrauſtes, general of

[2] Xenoph. lib. 3. p. 392.

the

the Perſian forces in Aſia, raiſed a ſtrong confederacy againſt the Spartans, by properly diſtributing large ſums amongſt the leading men of the Grecian Republicks. [1] Conon totally defeated the Spartan fleet commanded by Piſander, and, by the help of the Perſian money, [2] rebuilt the ſtrong walls and other fortifications of Athens, which Lyſander had demoliſhed. [3] The Spartans, jealous of the riſing power of the Athenians, who ſeemed to aſpire at recovering their former grandeur, made ſuch advantageous offers to the Perſians by their Admiral Antalcidas, that they once more drew them over to their party. [4] Conon was recalled and impriſoned upon the ſuggeſtions of Antalcidas, that he had embezzled the money allotted for the reeſtabliſhment of Athens, and was no friend to the Perſian intereſt. The Athenians now ſent Thraſybulus, their great deliverer, with a fleet of forty ſail to annoy the Spartans: he reduced ſeveral cities which had revolted to the enemy, but was ſlain by the Rhodians in an unſucceſsful attempt upon their iſland. [5] Conon, according to Juſtin, was executed at Suſa by the Perſians. Xenophon, who

[1] Xenoph. lib. 4. p. 404.
[2] Ibid. p. 420.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid. 421.
[5] Juſtin. in Vit. Conon.

lived

lived at the ſame time, is ſilent as to his death; but, whatever might be his fate, it is certain he is no more mentioned in hiſtory. After the death of theſe two great men, we meet with none but Chabrias, Iphicrates, and Timotheus, the ſon of Conon, whoſe characters are worthy of our notice, 'till the time of Demoſthenes and Phocion. The martial ſpirit of the Athenians ſubſided in proportion as luxury and corruption gained ground amongſt them. The love of eaſe, and a moſt inſatiable fondneſs for diverſions, now took place of thoſe generous ſentiments which before knew no other object but the liberty and glory of their country. If we trace the riſe of publick virtue up to its firſt ſource, and ſhew the different effects ariſing from the prevailing influence of the different ruling paſſions, we may juſtly account for the fatal and amazing change in that once glorious Republick. A ſhort digreſſion therefore, on that ſubject, may perhaps be neither unuſeful nor unentertaining.

Of all the human paſſions ambition may prove the moſt uſeful, or the moſt deſtructive to a people. The—

[1]*—Digito monſtrari et dicier hic eſt*;

the fondneſs for admiration and applauſe

[1] Perſius, ſat. 1.

ſeems

ſeems co-eval with man, and accompanies us from the cradle to the grave. Every man pants after diſtinction, and even in this world affects a kind of immortality. When this love of admiration and applauſe is the only end propoſed by ambition, it then becomes a primary paſſion; all the other paſſions are compelled to be ſubſervient, and will be wholly employed on the means conducive to that end. But whether this paſſion for fame, this eagerneſs after that imaginary life, which exiſts only in the breath of other people, be laudable or criminal, uſeful or frivolous, muſt be determined by the means employed, which will always be directed to whatever happens to be the reigning object of applauſe. Upon this principle, however the means may differ, the end will be ſtill the ſame; from the hero down to the boxer in the bear-garden; from the legiſlator who new-models a ſtate, down to the humbler genius who ſtrikes out the neweſt cut for a coat-ſleeve. For it was the ſame principle directing to the ſame end, which impelled Eroſtratus to ſet fire to the temple of Diana, and Alexander to ſet the world in a flame ſo quickly after.

There is no mark which ſo ſurely indicates the reigning manners of a people at different periods, as that quality or turn of mind, which happens to be the reigning object

ject of publick applauſe. For as the reigning object of applauſe will neceſſarily conſtitute the leading-faſhion, and as the leading-faſhion always takes riſe among the great or leading people; if the object of applauſe be praiſe-worthy, the example of the Great will have a due influence upon the inferior claſſes; if frivolous or vicious, the whole body of the people will take the ſame caſt, and be quickly infected by the contagion. There cannot therefore be a more certain criterion, by which we may form our judgment of the national virtue or national degeneracy of any people, in any period of their exiſtence, than from thoſe characters, which are the moſt diſtinguiſhed in every period of their reſpective hiſtories. To analyze theſe remarkable characters; to inveſtigate the end propoſed by all their actions, which opens to us all their ſecret ſprings; and to develope the means employed for the acquiſition of that end, is not only the moſt entertaining, but, in my opinion, by much the moſt uſeful, part of hiſtory. For as the reigning object of applauſe ariſes from the prevailing manners of a people, it will neceſſarily be the reigning object of deſire, and continue to influence the manners of ſucceeding generations, till it is oppoſed, and gradually gives way to ſome new object. Conſequently the prevailing manners of any people

people may be inveſtigated without much difficulty, in my opinion, if we attend to the increaſe or decreaſe of good or bad characters, as recorded in any period of their hiſtory; becauſe the greater number will generally endeavour to diſtinguiſh themſelves by whatever happens at that time to be the reigning object of applauſe. Hence too we may obſerve the progreſſive order, in which the manners of any people prepared the way for every remarkable mutation in their government. For no eſſential mutation can ever be effected in any government (unleſs by the violence of external force) till the prevailing manners of the people are ripe for ſuch a change. Conſequently, as like cauſes will ever produce like effects; when we obſerve the ſame ſimilarity of manners prevailing amongſt our own people, with that which preceded the laſt fatal mutation of government in any other free nation; we may, at ſuch a time, give a ſhrewd gueſs at the approaching fate of our conſtitution and country. Thus in the infancy and riſe of the Grecian Republicks, when neceſſity of ſelf-defence had given a manly and warlike turn to the temper of the people, and the continuance of the ſame neceſſity had fixed it into a habit, the love of their country ſoon became the reigning object of pub-

lick

lick applauſe. As this reigning object conſequently became the chief object of deſire to every one who was ambitious of publick applauſe, it quickly grew to be the faſhion. The whole people in thoſe ſtates glowed with the generous principle of publick virtue to the higheſt degree of enthuſiaſm. Wealth had then no charms, and all the bewitching pleaſures of luxury were unknown, or deſpiſed. And thoſe brave people courted and embraced toils, danger, and even death itſelf, with the greateſt ardour, in purſuit of this darling object of their univerſal wiſhes. Every man planned, toiled, and bled, not for himſelf, but for his country. Hence the produce of thoſe ages was a race of patriot Stateſmen and real Heroes. This generous principle gave riſe to thoſe ſeminaries of manly bravery and heroic emulation, the Olympick, Iſthmian, and other publick games. To obtain the victory at thoſe ſcenes of publick glory was eſteemed the utmoſt ſummit of human felicity. A wreath of wild olive, laurel or parſley (the victor's prize), that *palma nobilis*, as Horace terms it, which

Terrarum dominos evehit ad Deos,

was infinitely more the object of emulation in thoſe generous times, than Coronets and Garters are of modern ambition. Let me add too, that as the former were invariably the

the reward of merit only, they reflected a very different luſtre upon the wearer. The honours acquired at theſe games quickly became the darling themes of the poets, and the charms of muſick were called in to give additional graces to poetry. Panegyrick ſwelled with the moſt nervous ſtrokes of eloquence, and decked up with all the flowers of rhetorick, was joined to the fidelity and dignity of Hiſtory; whilſt the canvaſs glowing with mimick life, and the animated marble, contributed all the powers of art to perpetuate the memory of the victors. Theſe were the noble incentives which fired the Grecian youth with the glorious emulation of treading in the ſteps of thoſe publick-ſpirited Heroes, who were the firſt inſtitutors of theſe celebrated games. Hence that refined taſte for arts and ſciences aroſe in Greece, and produced thoſe maſter-pieces of every kind, the inimitable remains of which not only charm, but raiſe the juſted admiration of the preſent times.

This taſte raiſed a new object of applauſe, and at laſt ſupplanted the parents which gave it birth. Poetry, Eloquence, and Muſick became equally the ſubjects of emulation at the publick games, were allotted their reſpective crowns, and opened a new road to fame and immortality. Fame was the end propoſed and hoped for by all; and thoſe who

who deſpaired of attaining it by the rugged and dangerous paths of honour, [1] ſtruck into the new and flowery road, which was quickly crowded with the ſervile herd of imitators. Monarchs [2] turned poets, and great men, fidlers; and money was employed to biaſs the judges at the publick games to crown wretched verſes and bungling performers with the wreaths appropriated only to ſuperior merit. This taſte prevailed more or leſs in every ſtate of Greece (Sparta alone excepted) according to the different turn of genius of each people; but it obtained the moſt ready admiſſion at Athens, which quickly became the chief ſeat of the Muſes and Graces.

Thus a new object of applauſe introducing a new taſte, produced that fatal alteration in the manners of the Athenians, which became a concurrent cauſe of the ruin of their Republick. For though the manners of the Athenians grew more polite, yet they grew more corrupt, and publick virtue ceaſed gradually to be the object of publick applauſe and publick emulation. As dramatick poetry affected moſt the taſte of the Athenians; the ambition of excelling in that ſpecies of poetry was ſo violent, that

[1] Lucian, p. 328. Edit. Bourdel. 1615.

[2] Dionyſius the tyrant of Syracuſe.
Diodor. Sicul. lib. 14 p. 318, 319.

Æſchy-

[1] Æſchylus died with grief, becauſe in a publick contention with Sophocles the prize was adjudged to his antagoniſt. But though we owe the fineſt pieces of that kind now extant to that prevailing taſte, yet it introduced ſuch a rage for theatrical entertainments as fatally contributed to the ruin of the Republick.

[2] Juſtin informs us that the publick virtue of Athens declined immediately after the death of Epaminondas. No longer awed by the virtue of that great man, which had been a perpetual ſpur to their ambition, they ſunk into a lethargy of effeminate indolence. The publick revenues appropriated for the ſervice of the fleet and army were ſquandered in publick feſtivals and publick entertainments. The ſtage was the chief object of the publick concern, and the theatres were crowded whilſt the camp was a deſart. Who trod the ſtage with the greateſt dignity, or who excelled moſt in the conduct of the Drama; not who was the ableſt General, or moſt experienced Admiral, was the object of the publick reſearch and publick applauſe. Military virtue and the ſcience of war were held cheap, and poets and players engroſſed thoſe honours due only to

[1] Plut. in Vit. Cim. p. 483.
[2] Juſtin. p. 67. Edit. Elziv.

the patriot and the hero; whilſt the hard-earned pay of the ſoldier and the ſailor was employed in corrupting the indolent pleaſure-taking citizen. The fatal conſequence of this degeneracy of manners, as Juſtin aſſures, was this: That the able Philip, taking advantage of the indolence and effeminacy of the Athenians, who before took the lead in defence of the liberty of Greece, drew his beggarly kingdom of Macedon out of its primitive obſcurity, and at laſt reduced all Greece under the yoke of ſervitude.

[1] Plutarch, in his inquiry whether the Athenians were more eminent in the arts of war or in the arts of peace, ſeverely cenſures their inſatiable fondneſs for diverſions. He aſſerts, that the money idly thrown away upon the repreſentation of the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides alone, amounted to a much greater ſum than had been expended in all their wars againſt the Perſians, in defence of their liberty and common ſafety. That judicious philoſopher and hiſtorian, to the eternal infamy of the Athenians, records a ſevere but ſenſible reflection of a Lacedemonian who happened to be preſent at theſe diverſions. The generous Spartan, trained up in a ſtate where publick virtue ſtill continued to be the object of publick

[1] Plut. de Glor. Athen. p. 349. Vol. 2.

ap-

applauſe, could not behold the ridiculous aſſiduity of the Choragi, or magiſtrates who preſided at the publick ſhews, and the immenſe ſums which they laviſhed in the decorations of a new tragedy, without indignation. "He [1] therefore frankly told the "Athenians, that they were highly criminal "in waſting ſo much time, and giving that "ſerious attention to trifles, which ought "to be dedicated to the affairs of the pub-"lick. That it was ſtill more criminal to "throw away upon ſuch baubles as the de-"corations of a theatre, that money which "ought to be applied to the equipment of "their fleet, or the ſupport of their army. "That diverſions ought to be treated merely "as diverſions, and might ſerve to relax "the mind at our idle [2] hours, or when over "a bottle; if any kind of utility could "ariſe from ſuch trifling pleaſures. But "to ſee the Athenians make the duty they "owed to their country give way to their "paſſion for the entertainments of the "theatre, and to waſte unprofitably that "time and money upon ſuch frivolous di-"verſions, which ought to be appropriated "to the affairs and the neceſſities of the

[1] Plut. Sympoſiac. p. 710.

[2] Ενπότω καὶ ἀνέσει.

" ſtate, appeared to him to be the height of
" infatuation."

Could we raiſe the venerable Philoſopher from the grave to take a ſhort ſurvey of the preſent manners of our own countrymen, would he not find them an amazingly exact copy of thoſe of the Athenians, in the times immediately preceding their ſubjection to Macedon? Would he not ſee the ſame ſeries of daily and nightly diverſions, adapted to the taſte of every claſs of people, from the publick breakfaſting (that bane to the time and induſtry of the tradeſman) up to our modern Orgyes, the midnight-revels of the Maſquerade? If he cenſured the Athenians for throwing away ſo much time and attention upon the chaſte and manly ſcenes of Sophocles and Euripides, what muſt he have thought of that ſtrange *Shakeſpearomania* (as I may term it) which prevailed ſo lately, and ſo univerſally amongſt all ranks and all ages? Had he enquired of thoſe multitudes who ſo long crowded both theatres at the repreſentation of Romeo and Juliet, what were the ſtriking beauties which ſo ſtrongly and ſo repeatedly engaged their attention, could a tenth part of the affected admirers of that pathetick poet, have given him a more ſatisfactory anſwer than, " That
" it was the faſhion?" Would he not be convinced that faſhion was the only motive,

when

when he ſaw the ſame people thronging with the ſame eagerneſs, and ſwallowing the ribaldry of modern farce, and the buffoonery of pantomine with the ſame fury of applauſe? Muſt he not have pronounced, that they as much exceeded the Athenians in thoughtleſs levity and folly, as they ſunk beneath them in taſte and judgment? For Plutarch does not find fault with the fine taſte of the Athenians for the noble compoſitions of thoſe incomparable poets; but for that exceſs of paſſion for the theatre, which, by ſetting up a new object of applauſe, had almoſt extinguiſhed that publick virtue, for which they had been ſo greatly eminent; and made them more ſollicitous about the fate of a new tragedy, or the deciſion of the pretenſions of two rival players, than about the fate of their country. But what idea muſt he have of the higher claſs of our people, when he ſaw thoſe who ſhould be foremoſt in a time of diſtreſs and danger, to animate the drooping ſpirit of their countrymen by the luſtre of their example, attentive only to the unmanning trills of an Opera; a degree of effeminacy which would have diſgraced even the women of Greece, in times of greateſt degeneracy. If he was informed that this ſpecies of diverſion was ſo little natural to the rougher genius, as well as climate of Britain, that we were obliged to purchaſe

and fetch over the worſt performers of Italy at the expence of vaſt ſums; what opinion muſt he form of our underſtanding? But if he was to ſee the inſolence of theſe hirelings, and the ſervile proſtration of their pay-maſters to theſe idols of their own making, how muſt ſuch egregious folly excite his contempt and indignation! In the midſt of theſe ſcenes of diſſipation, this varying round of unceaſing diverſions, how muſt he be aſtoniſhed at the complaint of poverty, taxes, the decay of trade, and the great difficulty of raiſing the neceſſary ſupplies for the publick ſervice, which would ſtrike his ear from every quarter! Would not his cenſure upon our inconſiſtent conduct be juſt the ſame which the honeſt Spartan paſſed upon the infatuated Athenians? When a national Militia of 60,000 men only was aſked for, would he not have bluſhed for thoſe who oppoſed a meaſure (once the ſupport and glory of every free ſtate in Greece) and whittled it down to half the number from a pretended principle of œconomy? But could his philoſophick gravity refrain a ſmile, when he ſaw the ſame people laviſhing their thouſands in ſubſcriptions to balls, concerts, operas, and a long train of expenſive et cætera's, yet ſo wondrous frugal in pounds, ſhillings, and pence, in a meaſure ſo eſſential to the very ſafety of the nation?

If

If therefore he ſaw a people bending under an accumulating load of debt, almoſt to bankruptcy, yet ſinking more and more into a luxury, known in his time only to the effeminate Perſians, and which required the wealth of Perſia to ſupport it: Involved in a war, unſucceſsful 'till meaſures were changed with miniſters; yet indulging in all the pleaſures of pomp and triumph, in the midſt of national loſſes and national diſhonour:——Contracting daily freſh debts of millions, to carry on that war, yet idly conſuming more wealth in the uſeleſs pageantry of equipage, dreſs, table, and the almoſt innumerable articles of expenſive luxury, than would ſupport their fleets and armies; he could not help pronouncing ſuch a people mad paſt the cure of Hellebore, and ſelf-devoted to deſtruction.

This ſtrange degeneracy of the Athenian manners, which Plutarch ſo ſeverely cenſures, was firſt introduced (as that great man informs us) by [1] Pericles. That ambitious man determined to ſupplant his rival Cimon, who, by the *éclât* of his victories, and the ſervices he had done the publick, was conſidered as the firſt man in Athens, and ſupported his popularity by the diſtribution of a large fortune. Pericles, greatly inferior in

[1] Plut. in Vit. Pericl. p. 156.

point of fortune, and no way able to contend with him in liberality and magnificence, ſtruck out a new method of gaining over the people to his party. He procured a law, by which every citizen was intitled to a gratuity out of the publick money, not only for attending at the courts of judicature, and aſſemblies of the ſtates; but even at the entertainments of the theatre, and the publick games and ſacrifices on their numerous days of feſtivity. Thus Pericles bought the people with their own money; a precedent which has been ſo ſucceſsfully followed by corrupt and ambitious ſtateſmen in all ſucceeding ages. To this piece of ſtate-craft, not to ſuperior abilities, late miniſters owed their long reigns, which enabled them to reduce corruption into ſyſtem.

The conſequence of this corruption, as we may gather from the writings of Demoſthenes, was, that in a few years time the Athenians were no more the ſame people. The annual fund appropriated to the publick ſervice for the army and navy, was wholly diverted to the ſupport of the theatre. Their officers regarding nothing but their rank and pay, inſtead of patriots, were degenerated [1] into meer mercenaries. The emu-

[1] Plut. in Vit. Phocion, p. 744. Item Demoſt. Olynth. 2. p. 25. Edit. Wolf. 1604.

lation,

lation, of who ſhould ſerve their country beſt, no longer ſubſiſted amongſt them; but of who ſhould obtain the moſt lucrative command. The people taſting the ſweets of corruption, and enervated by the luxury of a city, which was one perpetual ſcene of feſtivals and diverſions, grew averſe to the toils and dangers of war, which now ſeemed an inſupportable ſlavery, and beneath the dignity of free citizens. The defence of the ſtate was committed to mercenary hirelings, who behaved ſo ill that their affairs were in the utmoſt diſorder. Of all their leading men, Demoſthenes and Phocion were alone proof againſt the gold of Macedon; the reſt were Philip's known and avowed penſioners. Demoſthenes, at this alarming juncture, laid before the people the ambitious views of Philip, and the diſtreſſed ſituation of their country, with the utmoſt freedom. He employed all the energy and Pathos of eloquence to rouſe them out of that lethargy of indolence and inattention to the publick ſafety, into which their own luxury, and the flatteries of their corrupt Demagogues, had thrown them.

He demonſtrated to them, that the glorious principle, which had ſo long preſerved the liberty of Greece, and had enabled them

[1] Demoſt. Orat. in Philip. 3. p. 86, 92.

to

to triumph over the whole force and opulence of the mighty power of Perſia, was that common hatred, that general deteſtation of corruption, which prevailed ſo univerſally amongſt their generous fore-fathers. That, in thoſe times of publick virtue, to receive preſents from any foreign power was deemed a capital crime. That if any man ſhould be found ſo ſhamefully profligate, as to ſell himſelf to any one who had deſigns upon the liberty of Greece; or ſhould endeavour to introduce corruption into his own country; death without mercy would have been his puniſhment here, and his memory branded with indelible and eternal infamy hereafter. That the Stateſmen and Generals of thoſe happier times, were abſolute ſtrangers to that moſt criminal and infamous kind of traffick; which was grown ſo common and ſo univerſal, that honour, fame, character, the liberty and welfare of their country were all ſet to ſale, and ſold publickly by [1] auction to the beſt bidder. He then made uſe of his utmoſt art, backed with the greateſt ſtrength of reaſoning, to perſuade the people, to give up that fund to the ſupport of the army and navy (the ſervice to which it had been originally appropriated) which from the time of Pericles

[1] Demoſt. ibid.

had

had been applied ſolely to defray the expences of the theatre. He ſhewed next, the folly and danger of confiding the defence of the ſtate to mercenary forces; who had already ſerved them ſo ill. He informed them, that their allies the Olynthians earneſtly inſiſted, that the troops ſent to their aſſiſtance might no longer be compoſed of venal hirelings as before, but of native Athenians, animated with a zeal for the glory of their country, and warm in the intereſt of the common cauſe. Both theſe motions were oppoſed by the corrupt party who adhered to Philip. The people were unwilling to give up that fund, even to the moſt preſſing exigencies of the ſtate, which enabled them to gratify their favourite paſſion; thus the oppoſition of the people quaſhed the former of theſe motions. But though the urgent, and repeated remonſtrances of Demoſthenes prevailed in favour of the latter, yet the Demagogues, who omitted no opportunity of convincing Philip, how well he employed his money, took care to reduce the promiſed ſuccours to a very ſmall number, and to procure Chares, a [1] creature of their own, to be placed at the head of the expedition. Small as thoſe ſuccours were, yet they did the Olynthians eſſential ſervice. But as all

[1] Plut. in Vit. Phocion. p. 747.

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the eloquence of Demoſthenes could not prevail upon his countrymen to make more vigorous efforts, the city of Olynthus fell the year following into the hands of Philip [1] by the treachery of Euthycrates and Laſthenes, two of the leading citizens. Philip ſtill continued his encroachments upon the allies of Athens; ſometimes cajoling, ſometimes bullying the Athenians; juſt as he found either method moſt conducive to his purpoſe, in which he was punctually ſeconded by the corrupt Demagogues. But at laſt the joint attack which he made upon the cities of Perynthus and Byzantium, from whoſe territories the Athenians drew their chief ſupplies of corn, at once opened their eyes, and rouzed them from their indolence. They equipped a very large armament with great expedition; but the Philippick faction had ſtill influence enough with the people, to obtain the command of it for their friend Chares. The conduct of this general was exactly anſwerable to the opinion and hopes of his friends, who had procured him that employment. Chares, voluptuous, yet ſordidly avaritious; vain and aſſuming, yet without either courage or capacity; rapacious, and intent only upon enriching himſelf at the expence either of friend or foe,

[1] Diodor. Sicul. lib. 16. p. 450.

was

was refuſed admittance by the inhabitants of Byzantium; who from experience were too well acquainted with his character. Enraged at ſuch an unexpected affront, this doughty general employed his time in parading along the coaſts, deteſted by his allies whom he plundered, and deſpiſed by his enemies whom he had not the courage to face. The Athenians, ſenſible of their folly, diſplaced Chares, and gave the command to Phocion. The able and honeſt Phocion was received with open arms by the Byzantines, and quickly convinced his countrymen, that he was more than a match for Philip. He not only drove that ambitious monarch out of the territories of the allies; but compelled him to retire with great loſs and precipitation into his own dominions, where Phocion made ſeveral glorious and ſucceſsful incurſions. Philip now throwing off the maſque, marched his army towards Athens, with a reſolution to humble that people, who were the chief obſtacle to his ambitious views. Demoſthenes alone took the lead upon this occaſion, and perſuaded his countrymen to join the Thebans with all the force they could raiſe, and make head againſt the invader. Philip finding his meaſures quite diſconcerted by this confederacy, ſent an embaſſy to Athens to propoſe terms of peace, and to profeſs his deſire of living in amity with the

Athenians.

Athenians. Phocion, anxious about the ſucceſs of a war, which he knew his countrymen had not virtue enough to ſupport, and where the loſs of a ſingle battle muſt be fatal to the ſtate, pleaded ſtrongly for pacifick meaſures. But the flaming zeal of Demoſthenes prevailed. Phocion was not only inſulted, but excluded from all ſhare in the command of the army by the infatuated people. Chares, ſo notorious for his cowardice and incapacity, who (as [1] Diodorus Siculus informs us) knew no more the duty of a general than the meaneſt private ſoldier in the army, and one Lyſicles, a man of daring courage, but raſh and ignorant, were appointed commanders in chief. As Demoſthenes had puſhed on the people to this war, and was at that time at the head of affairs, this fatal ſtep muſt be entirely attributed to his private pique at Phocion for oppoſing his meaſures. Phocion had more than once beaten Philip with much inferior forces, and was indiſputably the ableſt general of the age, and the only man whom Philip was afraid of. The conduct therefore of Demoſthenes was ſo raſh and weak in the management of this war [2], that Plutarch reſolves the whole into a certain di-

[1] Diodor. Sicul. lib. 16. p. 476.

[2] Plut. in Vit. Demoſt. p. 854.

vine

vine fatality; which, in the circumvolution of mundane affairs, had limited the freedom of Greece to that particular point of time. The battle of Chæronea, which enſued quickly after, gave the Athenians a too fatal proof of the ſuperior foreſight and ſagacity of Phocion, and their own ſuperlative folly in the choice of their generals. The battle was fought with equal bravery and obſtinacy on both ſides, and the confederates behaved as well as men could do upon the occaſion; but their defeat was owing entirely to the incapacity of the Athenian commanders. This was ſo apparent, [1] that Philip obſerving a capital blunder committed by [2] Lyſicles in the heat of the action, turned about coolly, and remarked to his officers, "That the Athenians knew not how to conquer." This fault in point of generalſhip quickly turned the ſcale in favour of the abler Philip, who knew his trade too well to let ſlip ſo material an advantage. The Athenians were totally routed, and that fatal [3] day put a period to the liberty and independency of Greece.

[1] Polyæn. Stratagem, lib. 4. c. 3. p. 311.

[2] Polyænus calls this general Stratocles.

[3] Hic dies univerſæ Greciæ et gloriam dominationis, et vetuſtiſſimam libertatem finivit. Juſtin. lib. 9. p. 79. Edit. Elziv.

Thus

Thus fell the Athenians, and their fall involved the reſt of Greece in one common ruin. The decadence of this once glorious and free State was begun by Pericles, who firſt introduced venality amongſt the people for the ſupport of luxury! continued by the venal orators who encouraged that corruption to maintain their influence over the people; but finiſhed by that fatal diſunion between the only two men, whoſe publick virtue and abilities could have ſaved their country from deſtruction.

Athens however, by her fall, has left us ſome inſtructions highly uſeful for our preſent conduct. Warned by her fate we may learn, —that the moſt effectual method which a bad miniſter can take, to tame the ſpirit of a brave and free people, and to melt them down to ſlavery, is to promote luxury, and encourage and diffuſe a taſte for publick diverſions——That luxury, and a prevailing fondneſs for publick diverſions, are the never-failing fore-runners of univerſal idleneſs, effeminacy, and corruption.—That there cannot be a more certain ſymptom of the approaching ruin of a State than when a firm adherence to party is fixed upon as the only teſt of merit, and all the qualifications requiſite to a right diſcharge of every employment, are reduced to that ſingle ſtandard.—That theſe evils take root, and ſpread by al-

moſt imperceptible degrees in time of peace and national affluence; but, if left to their full and natural effects without controul, they will inevitably undermine and deſtroy the moſt flouriſhing and beſt founded conſtitution.—That in times of peace and affluence luxury, and a fondneſs for diverſions, will aſſume the ſpecious names of politeneſs, taſte, and magnificence. Corruption will put on different maſks. In the corruptors it will be termed able management, encouraging the friends of the adminiſtration, and [1] cementing a mutual harmony, and mutual dependance between the three different eſtates of the government. In the corrupted it will be denominated loyalty, attachment to the government, and prudence in providing for one's own family. That in ſuch times theſe evils will gain a freſh acceſſion of ſtrength from their very effects; becauſe corruption will occaſion a greater circulation of the publick money; and the diſſipations of luxury, by promoting trade, [2] will gild over private vices with the plauſible appearance of publick benefits.—That when a State, ſo circumſtanced, is forced into a war with any formi-

[1] Thus Demades termed the gratuities given to the people out of the publick money, the glue or cement of the different parts of the Republick. Plut. Queſt. Platon, p. 1011.

[2] Fable of the bees.

dable power, then, and not 'till then, theſe baleful evils will ſhew themſelves in their true colours, and produce their proper effects. The counſels in ſuch a State will be weak and puſillanimous, becauſe the able and honeſt citizens, who aim ſolely at the publick welfare, will be excluded from all ſhare in the government from party motives.—— Their meaſures will terminate in poor ſhifts, and temporary expedients, calculated only to amuſe, or divert the attention of the people from prying too cloſely into their iniquitous conduct. Their fleets and armies will be either employed in uſeleſs parade, or will miſcarry in action from the incapacity of their commanders, becauſe, as all the chief poſts will be filled up with the creatures of the prevailing faction, ſuch officers will be more intent upon enriching themſelves than annoying the enemy; and will act as ſhall be judged moſt conducive to the private intereſt of their party, not to the publick ſervice of their country. For they will naturally imagine, that the ſame power, which placed them in the command, will have weight enough to ſcreen them from the reſentment of an injured people.——Their ſupplies for the extraordinary expences of the war will be raiſed with difficulty;——becauſe, as ſo great a part of the publick money will be abſorbed by the number of penſions and lucrative

crative employments, and diverted to other purpoſes of corruption, the funds deſtined for the publick ſervice will be found greatly deficient. If the rich are applied to, in ſuch depraved times, to contribute their ſuperfluous wealth towards the publick expences, their anſwer will be the ſame which [1]Scopas the rich Theſſalian made to a friend, who aſked him for a piece of furniture, which he judged wholly uſeleſs to the poſſeſſor, becauſe it was quite ſuperfluous. "You miſtake, my friend; the ſupreme happineſs of our lives conſiſts in thoſe things which you call ſuperfluous, not in thoſe which you call neceſſaries." The people, accuſtomed to ſell themſelves to the beſt bidder, will look upon the wages of corruption as their birth-right, and will neceſſarily riſe in their demands, in proportion as luxury, like other faſhions, deſcends from the higher to the lower claſſes. Heavy and unequal taxes muſt conſequently be impoſed to make up this deficiency; and the operations of the war muſt either be retarded by the ſlowneſs in collecting the produce, or the money muſt be borrowed at high intereſt and exceſſive premiums, and the publick given up a prey to the extortion

[1]—Ἀλλὰμὴν τέτοις ἐσμέν ἡμεῖς εὐδαίμονες καὶ μακάριοι τοῖς περιττοῖς, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκείνοις τοῖς ἀναγκαίοις. Plut. de Cupidit. p. 527.

of uſurers. If a [1] venal and luxurious Demades ſhould be at the head of the ruling party, ſuch an adminiſtration would hardly find credit ſufficient to ſupport their meaſures, as the moneyed men would be averſe to truſting their property in ſuch rapacious [2] hands; for the chain of ſelf-intereſt, which links ſuch a ſet of men together, will reach from the higheſt quite down to the loweſt officer of the ſtate; becauſe the higher officers, for the mutual ſupport of the whole, muſt connive at the frauds and rapines of the inferior, or ſcreen them if detected.

If therefore the united voice of a people, exhauſted by the oppreſſions of a weak and iniquitous adminiſtration, ſhould call a truly diſintereſted patriot to the helm, ſuch a man muſt be expoſed to all the malice of detected villany, backed by the whole weight of diſappointed faction. Plutarch has handed down to us a ſtriking inſtance of this truth in the caſe of Ariſtides, which is too remarkable to be omitted.

[3] When Ariſtides was created Quæſtor, or high Treaſurer of Athens, he fairly laid be-

[1] Demades, according to Plutarch, by the diſſoluteneſs of his life, and conduct in the adminiſtration, ſhipwrecked the Athenian Republick. Plut. in Vit. Phocion, p. 741.

[2] Plut. Apotheg. p. 188.

[3] Plut. in Vit. Ariſtid. p. 320.

fore

fore the Athenians what immenſe ſums the publick had been robbed of by their former Treaſurers, but eſpecially by Themiſtocles, whom he proved to be more criminal than any of the others. This warm and honeſt remonſtrance produced ſuch a powerful coalition between theſe publick plunderers, that when Ariſtides, at the expiration of his office, (which was annual, and elective) came to give up his accompts to the people, Themiſtocles publickly impeached him of the ſame crime, and, by the artifice of his corrupt party, procured him to be condemned and fined; but the honeſter, and more reſpectable part of the citizens highly reſenting ſuch an infamous method of proceeding, not only acquitted Ariſtides honourably, and remitted his fine, but, to ſhew their approbation of his conduct, elected him Treaſurer for the following year. At his entrance upon his office the ſecond time, he affected to appear ſenſible of his former error, and, by winking at the frauds of the inferior officers, and neglecting to ſcrutinize into their accompts, he ſuffered them to plunder with impunity. Theſe State-leeches, thus gorged with the publick money, grew ſo extremely fond of Ariſtides, that they employed all their intereſt to perſuade the people to elect him a third time to that important office. On the day of election, when the voices of the Athe-

nians were unanimous in his favour, this real Patriot ſtood up with honeſt indignation, and gave the people this ſevere, but juſt reprimand. "When, ſays he, I diſcharged my duty in this office the firſt time, with that zeal and fidelity which every honeſt man owes to his country, I was vilified, inſulted, and condemned. Now I have given full liberty to all theſe robbers of the publick here preſent to pilfer, and prey upon your finances at pleaſure, I am, it ſeems, a moſt upright miniſter, and a moſt worthy citizen. Believe me, O Athenians! I am more aſhamed of the honour, which you have ſo unanimouſly conferred upon me this day, than of that unjuſt ſentence which you paſſed upon me with ſo much infamy the year before. But it gives me the utmoſt concern, upon your account, when I ſee that it is eaſier to merit your favour and applauſe by flattering, and conniving at the rogueries of a pack of villains, than by a frugal and uncorrupt adminiſtration of the publick revenues." He then diſcloſed all the frauds and thefts, which had been committed that year in the treaſury, which he had privately minuted down for that purpoſe. The conſequence was, that all thoſe, who juſt before had been ſo loud in his praiſe, were ſtruck dumb with ſhame and confuſion; but he himſelf received thoſe high encomiums, which he had ſo juſtly merited,

rited, from every honeſt citizen. It is evident from this whole paſſage, as related by Plutarch, that Ariſtides might have made his own fortune, at the expence of the publick, with the ſame eaſe, and to as great a degree as any of his predeceſſors had done before, or any miniſters in modern States have done ſince. For the reſt of the officers, who ſeemed to think their chief duty conſiſted in making the moſt of their places, ſhewed themſelves extremely ready to conceal the peculation of their chief, becauſe it gave them a right to claim the ſame indulgence from him in return. A remark not reſtricted to the Athenians alone, but equally applicable to every corrupt adminiſtration under every government. Hiſtory, both ancient and modern, will furniſh us with numerous inſtances of this truth, and poſterity will probably make the ſame remark, when the genuine hiſtory of ſome late adminiſtrations ſhall ſee the light in a future age.

If the Athenians were ſo corrupt in the time when Ariſtides lived, ought we to wonder at that amazing height to which that corruption arrived in the time of Demoſthenes, when left to its full effects for ſo long a term of years? Could the State of Athens at that time have been preſerved by human means; the indefatigable zeal of Demoſthenes, joined to the ſtrict œconomy, the inflexible integri-

ty, and ſuperior abilities of Phocion, might have raiſed her once more to her ancient luſtre. But the event ſhewed, that luxury, corruption and faction, the cauſes of her ruin, had taken too deep root in the very vitals of the Republick. The Grecian hiſtory indeed affords us ever memorable inſtances of Republicks bending under the yoke of foreign or domeſtick oppreſſion, yet freed and reſtored to their former liberty and dignity by the courage and virtue of ſome eminent Patriot citizen. But if we reflect upon the means, by which theſe great events were ſo ſucceſsfully conducted, we ſhall always find, that there yet remained in the people a fund of publick virtue ſufficient to ſupport their chiefs in thoſe arduous enterprizes. The ſpirit of liberty in a free people may be cramped and preſſed down by external violence; but can ſcarce ever be totally extinguiſhed. Oppreſſion will only encreaſe its elaſtic force, and when rouzed to action by ſome daring chief, it will break out, like fired gun-powder, with irreſiſtable impetuoſity. We have no occaſion to look back to antiquity for convincing proofs of this moſt important truth. Our own hiſtory is but one continued ſcene of alternate ſtruggles between encroaching princes, aiming at abſolute power, and a brave people reſolutely determined to vindicate their freedom. The genius of liberty has hither-

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to roſe ſuperior in all thoſe conflicts, and acquired ſtrength from oppoſition. May it continue to prevail to the end of time! The United Provinces are a ſtriking proof that the ſpirit of liberty, when animated and conducted by publick virtue, is invincible. Whilſt under the dominion of the houſe of Auſtria, they were little better than a poor aſſemblage of fiſhing-towns and villages. But the virtue of one great man not only enabled them to throw off that inhuman yoke, but to make a reſpectable figure amongſt the firſt powers in Europe. All the different States in Europe, founded by our Gothick anceſtors, were originally free. Liberty was as truly their birth-right as it is ours; and though they have been wormed out of it by fraud, or robbed of it by violence, yet their inherent right to it ſtill ſubſiſts, though the exerciſe of that right is ſuperſeded, and reſtrained by force. Hence no deſpotick government can ever ſubſiſt without the ſupport of that inſtrument of tyranny and oppreſſion, a ſtanding army. For all illegal power muſt ever be ſupported by the ſame means by which it was firſt acquired. France was not broke into the yoke of ſlavery till the infamous adminiſtrations of Richlieu and Mazarin. But though loyalty and zeal for the glory of their Prince ſeem to form the characteriſtick of the French nation, yet the late

late glorious ſtand againſt the arbitrary impoſitions of the crown, which will immortalize the parliament of Paris, proves that they ſubmit to their chains with reluctance. Luxury is the real bane of publick virtue, and conſequently of liberty, which gradually ſinks in proportion as the manners of a people are ſoftened and corrupted. Whenever therefore this eſſential ſpirit, as I may term it, of a free nation is totally diſſipated, the people become a mere *Caput Mortuum*, a dead inert maſs, incapable of reſuſcitation, and ready to receive the deepeſt impreſſions of ſlavery. Thus the publick virtue of Thraſybulus, Pelopidas and Epaminondas, Philopæmen, Aratus, Dion, &c. reſtored their reſpective States to freedom and power, becauſe though liberty was ſuppreſſed, yet the ſpirit of it ſtill remained, and acquired new vigour from oppreſſion. Phocion and Demoſthenes failed, becauſe corruption had extinguiſhed publick virtue, and luxury had changed the ſpirit of liberty into licentiouſneſs and ſervility.

That luxury and corruption, encouraged and propagated by a moſt abandoned faction, have made an alarming progreſs in our nation, is a truth too evident to be denied. The effects have been too ſenſibly felt during the courſe of the late and preſent wars, which

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till the laſt campaign, were the moſt expenſive, and the leaſt ſucceſsful of any we ever yet engaged in. But a late ſignal change muſt convince our enemies, that we have a fund of publick virtue ſtill remaining, capable of vindicating our juſt rights, and raiſing us out of that calamitous ſituation, into which we were plunged under ſome late adminiſtrations. When the publick imagined the helm in the hands of corruption, puſillanimity and ignorance, they transferred it to a virtuous Citizen, poſſeſſed, in their opinion, of the zeal and eloquence of Demoſthenes, joined to the publick œconomy, incorrupt honeſty, and immoveable fortitude of Ariſtides and Phocion. The numerous diſintereſted marks of approbation, ſo lately given from every part of this kingdom, demonſtrate the reſolution and ability of the publick to ſupport that miniſter, as long as he purſues his upright plan of conduct with undeviating firmneſs.

From the time of Phocion, the Athenian hiſtory affords little more than a detail of [1] ſcandalous decrees, and deſpicable inſtances of the levity and ſervile adu-

[1] Plut. in Vit. Demet. p. 893—94—900.

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lation of that abject people. Reduced at laſt to a province of the Romans, Athens contributed her taſte for arts and ſciences towards poliſhing, and her paſſion for theatrical performances towards corrupting the manners of that warlike people.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of THEBES.

THE accounts of the earlier ages of this ancient Republick are ſo enveloped in fable, that we muſt rather apply for them to the poets than the hiſtorians. [1] Pauſanias gives us a liſt of ſixteen Kings of this country, down from Cadmus incluſive, who evidently belong to the fabulous times of the Heroes. [2] He ſeems indeed to acknowledge as much, ſince he confeſſes, that as he could find no better account of their origin, he was obliged to take up with fable. [3] After the death of Xanthus, the laſt of thoſe Kings, the Thebans, as the ſame author relates, diſguſted at Monarchy, changed the form of their government into a Republick. But it is in vain to ſearch for the cauſe, or manner how this revolution was effected, either in Pauſanias, or any other hiſtorian. All we can learn of the Thebans or [4] Bœotians from hiſtory, is, that they were remarkable for

[1] Pauſan. Grec. Deſcrip. lib. 9. c. 5. p. 718. Edit. Kechnii.

[2] Ου γαρ τι ηδυναμην, ες αυτες παρευρειν, επομαι τω μυθω. Id. ibid.

[3] Ibid. p. 723.

[4] Thebes was the capital of Bœotia.

their

their dullneſs and ſtupidity, even to a [1] proverb: that, 'till the time of Pelopidas and Epaminondas, they made as poor a figure in the art of war as in the ſciences: that their form of government was Democratick; and that, as uſually happens in that kind of government, they were divided into factions.

After the famous peace of Antalcidas, by which the honour and true intereſt of Greece was ſacrificed to the ambition of the Spartans, whatever State refuſed to come into their meaſures, was condemned to feel the effects of their reſentment. They had compelled the Thebans to accede to that treaty, though it deprived them of the dominion over Bœotia; and afterwards, by the perfidy of the Ariſtocratick faction, got poſſeſſion of their citadel, and reduced them to a ſtate of abſolute ſubjection. This was the wretched ſtate of the Thebans 'till they were delivered both from foreign and domeſtick ſlavery, and raiſed to a height of power ſuperior to every other State of Greece by the virtue of Pelopidas and Epaminondas. I have ſelected therefore this revolution as the moſt intereſting, and moſt worthy of our attention; becauſe it exhibits a convincing proof, that [2]

[1] Bœotûm in craſſo jurares aëre natum. Hor. epiſ. 1. lib. 2. lin. 244.

[2] Plut. in Vit. Pelopid. p. 287.

a brave

a brave and warlike people are not the produce of any particular ſpot, but are the growth of every place and country, where the natives are trained up in a true ſenſe of ſhame at mean and baſe actions, and inſpired with that manly courage which ariſes from the emulation after what is juſt and honourable. And that thoſe who are taught to dread infamy more than the greateſt dangers, prove the moſt invincible, and moſt formidable to an enemy. It inſtructs us too, that the moſt depreſſed, and moſt abject State may be extricated from the calamities of oppreſſion, and raiſed to ſuperior dignity and luſtre by a very ſmall number of virtuous patriots, whilſt the ſpirit of liberty yet remains, and the people ſecond the efforts of their leaders with unanimity and vigour.

The Thebans, by a fatal error in politicks, had choſen Iſmenias and Leontidas, who were at that time heads of two oppoſite parties, their ſupreme annual magiſtrates. Iſmenias was a ſteady aſſertor of the liberty and juſt rights of the people, and laboured to preſerve a due balance in the powers of the conſtitution. Leontidas wanted to engroſs the whole power into his own hands, and to govern by a ſmall, but ſelect number of his own creatures. It was impoſſible for union and harmony to ſubſiſt between two men, who had views ſo diametrically oppoſite.

Leon-

Leontidas therefore, who found his party the weakeſt, bargained by a private convention with Phæbidas, the Spartan General, to deliver up his country to the Lacedemonians, upon condition that the government ſhould be lodged in himſelf, and ſuch as he ſhould think proper to intruſt. The agreement was made, and Leontidas conveyed Phæbidas with a ſtrong body of troops into the citadel, at a time when the poor Thebans, wholly unapprehenſive of any danger from the Spartans, with whom they had lately concluded a peace, were celebrating a publick religious feſtival. Leontidas, now ſole governor, gave an immediate looſe to his paſſions. He ſeized his colleague Iſmenias, and, by the aſſiſtance of the Spartans, procured him to be tried, condemned, and executed, for caballing againſt the State. A pretence however ſtale, yet conſtantly urged by every iniquitous adminiſtration againſt all who have the reſolution to oppoſe their meaſures. The party of Iſmenias, upon the firſt news of the impriſonment of their chief, fled the city, and were afterwards baniſhed by a publick decree. A ſtrong proof of the fatal lengths a faction will run, which is compoſed of thoſe profligate wretches whoſe ſole aim is their own private emolument! Yet ſuch a faction, in all free States, when once luxury and corruption are introduced, is generally the moſt numerous,

merous, and moſt prevalent. Athens, not long before, had been betrayed to the Spartans in the ſame manner, and on the ſame infamous terms by a deteſtable faction, compoſed of the moſt abandoned of her citizens, and groaned under the ſame ſpecies of tyranny, 'till ſhe was freed by the great Thraſybulus. And, I believe, we have not yet forgot the ſtrong apprehenſions we were lately under, that a certain free State, upon the continent, was on the point of being ſold to a powerful neighbour by a ſimilar faction, and by a like iniquitous contract. We muſt remember too, after what manner that ſcheme was defeated by the glorious efforts of patriotiſm and publick ſpirit. I ſhall make no apology for this digreſſion, becauſe I thought the remark too appoſite to be omitted.

The honeſt citizens, who had fled to Athens, enraged to ſee their country thus tricked out of her liberty, and groaning under the moſt ignominious ſervitude, determined to ſet her free, or periſh in ſo glorious an attempt. The ſcheme was well concerted, and as boldly executed by Pelopidas, who entering the city with a ſmall number of the moſt reſolute of his party in diſguiſe, deſtroyed Leontidas, and his colleague Archias, with the moſt dangerous of his faction; and, by

the aſſiſtance of Epaminondas and his friends, with the additional aid of a large body of Athenians, recovered the citadel. [2] The Spartans, at the firſt news of this ſurprizing event, entered the Theban territories with a powerful army to take vengeance of the authors of this rebellion, as they termed it, and to reduce Thebes to its former ſubjection. The Athenians, conſcious of their own weakneſs, and the mighty power of Sparta, which they were by no means able to cope with, not only renounced all friendſhip with the Thebans, but proceeded with the utmoſt ſeverity againſt ſuch of their citizens as favoured that people. Thus the Thebans, deſerted by their allies, and deſtitute of friends, appeared to the reſt of Greece as devoted to inevitable deſtruction. In this deſperate ſituation of affairs, the virtue and abilities of thoſe two great men ſhone forth with greater luſtre. They begun by training their countrymen to the uſe of arms as well as the ſhortneſs of the time would permit, and inſpiring them with a hatred of ſervitude, and the generous reſolution of dying in defence of the liberty, and glory of their country. As they judged it imprudent to hazard a deciſive battle againſt the beſt troops in the

[1] Diodor. Sicul. lib. 15. p. 470.

[2] Plut. in Vit. Pelop. p. 284. et ſequent.

world,

world, with their new-raiſed militia, they haraſſed the Spartans with daily ſkirmiſhes to inſtruct their men in military diſcipline, and the trade of war. By this method they animated the minds of their people with the love of glory, and inured their bodies to the fatigues of war by exerciſe and labour, whilſt they acquired experience and courage by thoſe frequent encounters. Thus, as Plutarch remarks, when theſe able generals, by never engaging raſhly, but watching every favourable opportunity, had fleſhed the Thebans, like young ſtag-hounds, upon their enemies, and rendered them ſtaunch by taſting the ſweets of victory, and bringing them off in ſafety, they made them fond of the ſport, and eager after the moſt arduous enterprizes. By [1] this able management they defeated the Spartans at Platea and Theſpia, where they killed Phæbidas, who had before ſo treacherouſly ſurprized their citadel, and again routed them at Tenagra, the Spartan general himſelf falling by the hand of Pelopidas. Fluſhed with this ſucceſs, the Thebans feared no enemy, however ſuperior in number; and the battle of [2] Tegyra ſoon after raiſed the reputation of their arms to a degree unknown before. In this action the brave Pelopidas,

[1] Plut. in Vit. Pelop. p. 285.

[2] Id. p. 286, 287.

with a ſmall body of horſe, and no more than three hundred foot, broke through, and diſperſed a body of Spartans, conſiſting of above three times that number, made a terrible ſlaughter of the enemy, killed both their generals upon the ſpot, took the ſpoils of the dead, raiſed a trophy on the field of battle, and brought his little army home in triumph. Here the aſtoniſhed Greeks firſt ſaw the Spartans defeated by a much inferior number, and by an enemy too whom they had always held in the greateſt contempt. They had never, 'till that time, been beaten by equal, and rarely by much ſuperior numbers, and, 'till that fatal day, were juſtly reputed invincible. But this action was only the prelude to that deciſive ſtroke at Leuctra, which gave a fatal turn to the Spartan affairs, and ſtripped them of that dominion which they had ſo long exerciſed over the reſt of Greece. For this ſeries of ſucceſs, though it greatly elated the Thebans, yet rather enraged than diſcouraged the Spartans. The Athenians, jealous of the growing power of Thebes, ſtruck up a peace with their ancient rivals, in which all the Grecian States were included, except the Thebans, who were given up a ſacrifice to the Spartan vengeance. Cleombrotus, joint King with Ageſilaus, entered Bœotia with the largeſt and fineſt army the Spartans had ever ſent into the field. The

great Epaminondas engaged them at Leuctra with a body of ſix thouſand Thebans, which ſcarce equalled a third part of their enemies; but the admirable diſpoſition he made, joined to the ſkill and dexterity of Pelopidas, and the bravery of their troops ſupplied the defect of numbers. Cleombrotus was ſlain on the ſpot, his army totally routed, and the greateſt ſlaughter made of the native Spartans that had ever happened 'till that day, with the loſs only of three hundred Thebans. [1] Diodorus Siculus gives a conciſe account of this action in theſe remarkable words, "That Epaminondas, being reduced "to the neceſſity of engaging the whole "confederate force of the Lacedemonians, "and their allies, with only a handful of "his city militia, gained ſo compleat a victory over thoſe hitherto invincible warriors, that he ſlew their King Cleombrotus, and cut off the Spartan diviſion, "which was oppoſed to him, almoſt to a "man."

This victory gave ſo happy a turn to the affairs of the Thebans, that their alliance was now as much courted as before it had been deſpiſed and ſhunned. The Arcadians applied to them for ſuccours againſt the Spartans. Epaminondas and Pelopidas were ſent

[1] Διὸ καὶ συναναγκαθεὶς ὀλίγοις πολιτικοῖς, &c. Diodor. Sicul. lib. 15. p. 477. Edit. Henr. Stephani.

with a powerful army to their aſſiſtance. At the head of the joint forces theſe two great men entered Laconia, and appeared with a hoſtile army at the gates of Sparta; the firſt ſight of that kind ever ſeen by that haughty people. The maſterly conduct of Ageſilaus, and the deſperate valour of the Spartans ſaved the city, but could not prevent the ravage of their territories by the two Theban generals, who reſtored the Meſſenians to their kingdom, of which the Spartans had deprived them near three hundred years before, defeated the Athenians, who came to the aſſiſtance of the Spartans, and returned home with glory.

The Theban arms were now ſo terrible, and their power grown ſo formidable, that whilſt ſome States applied to them for protection, and others for aſſiſtance, the Macedonians referred the diſputes about the ſucceſſion to that crown to their deciſion, and gave hoſtages as a ſecurity that they would abide by their determination. The chief of theſe hoſtages was the famous Philip, father of Alexander the Great, who employed his time ſo well, under thoſe two able maſters in the art of war, that from them he acquired that military knowledge which proved afterwards ſo fatal to all Greece in general. Thus the publick virtue of two private citizens not only reſtored Thebes to her former liberty,

berty, but raiſed her to a much more reſpectable rank than ſhe had ever held before amongſt the Grecian Republicks.

But this eminent, and newly acquired degree of power was but of ſhort duration. Pelopidas had freed the Theſſalians from the inſults of Alexander the Pherean; but going to him afterwards, accompanied only by Iſmenias, to compoſe ſome differences, he was not only unjuſtly made priſoner, but treated with the moſt ſpiteful cruelty by that perfidious tyrant. The Thebans, enraged at this treacherous act, ſent an army againſt the tyrant, under the command of two new generals, who returned with loſs and diſhonour. The command was again committed to Epaminondas, who, by the terror of his name alone, brought the tyrant to reaſon, and procured the releaſe of his friend Pelopidas and Iſmenias. But the tyrant ſoon after renewing his uſual depredations upon the Theſſalians, Pelopidas was once more ſent with forces to their aſſiſtance. The two armies came ſoon to action, when Pelopidas, blinded by reſentment, and eager after revenge, ruſhed into the right wing, where the tyrant commanded in perſon, and fell, covered with wounds, in the midſt of his ſurrounding enemies. His death however was not unrevenged; for his troops, quite furious at the loſs of a general they ſo much revered and

loved, routed the enemy, and ſacrificed three thouſand of them to his manes.

Though the death of this truly great man was an irretrievable loſs to Thebes, yet Epaminondas ſtill ſurvived, and whilſt he lived, the good fortune and power of his country remained unaltered. But new diſturbances breaking out not long after, Epaminondas, at the head of his Thebans, broke again into Peloponneſus, eluded the vigilance of Ageſilaus, and advanced into the very ſuburbs of Sparta. But as they had juſt before received intelligence of his approach by a meſſenger from Ageſilaus, they were ſo well prepared for his reception, that he judged proper to retire, and, in his return, fell unexpectedly upon the Spartans and their allies at Mantinea. The diſpoſition of his forces upon this occaſion is eſteemed a maſter-piece of generalſhip; nor was his valour inferior to his conduct. He routed and made a terrible ſlaughter of the Spartans; but, puſhing on too eagerly to compleat his victory, he received a mortal wound in his breaſt, and was carried to his tent. As ſoon as he recovered his ſpeech, and was ſatisfied that his ſhield was ſafe, and the Thebans were victors, he ordered the broken part of the weapon to be drawn out of his wound, and died rejoicing at the good fortune of his country. Thus fell the incomparable Epaminondas, who,

as

as [1] Polybius obſerves, overcame his enemies, but was overcome by fortune. The ſame judicious [2] hiſtorian, in his remarks on the different conſtitutions of the ancient Republicks, obſerves, " That the flouriſhing " State of the Thebans was but of ſhort du- " ration, nor was their decay gradual, be- " cauſe their ſudden riſe was not founded on " right principles. He affirms that the The- " bans took the opportunity of attacking " the Spartans when the imprudence and " haughtineſs of that people had made them " quite odious to their allies; and that they " acquired amongſt the Greeks their high " reputation for valour by the virtue and " abilities of one or two great men, who " knew how to make the beſt uſe of thoſe " unexpected incidents, which ſo fortunate- " ly offered. He adds, that the ſudden " change in their affairs made it quickly ap- " pear to all, that their remarkable ſucceſs " was not owing to the ſyſtem of their go- " vernment, but to the publick virtue of " thoſe who were at the head of the admi- " niſtration. For that the power and gran- " deur of the Thebans aroſe, flouriſhed, " and fell with Epaminondas and Pelopi- " das is too evident, he ſays, to be denied.

[1] Polyb. Comparat. Epaminond. et Hannib. lib. 9. p. 762.

[2] Id. lib. 6. p. 678—79.

" Whence

" Whence he concludes, that the ſplendid
" figure the Thebans at that time made in
" the world, muſt not be aſcribed to their
" civil polity, but to thoſe two great men
" only."

I have hitherto conſidered them only in the light of virtuous citizens, and able generals; perhaps a ſhort ſketch of their characters as Patriot-Stateſmen may not be unacceptable nor uninſtructing.

Pelopidas and Epaminondas were both deſcended from ancient and worthy families. Pelopidas inherited a large fortune, which he enjoyed with honour to himſelf and utility to his friends; and by avoiding the two extremes of avarice and diſſipation, ſhewed that he was the maſter of, not the ſlave to, riches. The patrimony of Epaminondas on the contrary was extremely ſmall, yet equal to his utmoſt wants or deſires. Devoted wholly to the ſciences and the ſtudy of hiſtory and philoſophy, which mend the heart, whilſt they inſtruct the head, he preferred the ſweets of retirement and ſtudy to a life of pleaſure and oſtentation. He avoided all lucrative employments and ſtate honours with as much aſſiduity as they were courted and intrigued for by others: nor did he accept of the higheſt office in the ſtate, 'till he was called to it by the united cry of the people, and the exigencies of the publick. When dragged

dragged out of his retirement, and placed by force, as it were, at the head of affairs, he convinced his countrymen, as [1] Juſtin informs us, that he was fully equal to the taſk, and ſeemed rather to give luſtre to, than receive any from the dignity of his employment. He excelled in the art of ſpeaking, and was the moſt conſummate orator of his time; perſuaſion hung upon his tongue, and he was the maſter of the paſſions of his auditors by his eloquence, and of his own by philoſophy. With this truly great man Pelopidas was joined as colleague, who, when he could not prevail upon his friend Epaminondas to ſhare the enjoyment of his own fortune with him, copied him in the humbler virtues of private life. Thus both became the admiration of their countrymen for their temperance and moderation, as well as their plainneſs in dreſs, and frugality at their table. But the moſt ſtriking part of their character, was that unexampled union and perfect harmony which ſubſiſted between theſe two great men, and ended only with their lives. They filled at one and the ſame time the two higheſt poſts in the ſtate. The whole management of publick affairs was intruſted to their conduct, and all buſi-

[1] Juſtin. lib. 6. p. 74.

neſs

neſs paſſed through their hands. Yet during all that time, no latent ſpark of envy, jealouſy or ambition, no private or ſelfiſh views or difference of ſentiments (the fatal, but too general ſources of diſunion amongſt ſtateſmen) could in the leaſt affect their friendſhip, or ever make any impreſſion upon an union, which was founded upon the immoveable baſis of publick virtue. Animated, as Plutarch obſerves, and directing all their actions by this principle only, they had no other intereſt in view but that of the publick; and inſtead of enriching or aggrandizing their own families, the only emulation between them was, which ſhould contribute moſt to the advancement of the dignity and happineſs of his country. To crown all, they both died gloriouſly in defence of that independency which they had acquired and preſerved to the ſtate, and left the Thebans free, great and flouriſhing.

It is natural to think, that men of ſuch ſuperior merit, and ſo eminently diſintereſted, could never poſſibly be the objects of party-reſentment. Yet [1] we are aſſured in hiſtory, that they were frequently perſecuted by a virulent faction compoſed of the ſelfiſh; thoſe leeches whom theſe two virtuous men

[1] Plutarch, Juſtin, Corn. Nepos.

pre-

prevented from fattening upon the blood of the publick; and of the envious, from that ſtrong antipathy which bad men naturally bear to the good. For envy, that paſſion of low uncultivated minds, has a greater ſhare in party oppoſition than we are apt to imagine. A truth of which we have ſtrong proof in that celebrated paſſage, recorded by [1] Plutarch, between Ariſtides and the Athenian countryman. Though the virtue of theſe great men triumphed over all the malicious efforts of theſe domeſtick enemies; yet they had power enough at one time to impeach and bring them both to a publick trial for a breach [2] of formality relative to their office, though that very act had enabled them to render the moſt ſignal ſervices to their country. They were tried however, but honourably acquitted. At another time,

[1] When Ariſtides had acquired the ſirname of Juſt, he became the object of the Athenian envy, and the Oſtraciſm was demanded againſt him. Whilſt the people were preparing their ſhells, a country voter, who could neither read nor write, brought his ſhell to Ariſtides, and deſired him to write the name of Ariſtides upon it. Ariſtides, not a little ſurprized at his requeſt, aſked him what injury that Ariſtides had done him. "Me! none, replied the fellow, for I don't ſo much as know the man by ſight; but it galls me to the ſoul to hear him every where called the Juſt."—Plut. in Vit. Ariſtid. p. 322, 323.

[2] They kept the field and attacked Sparta, when the time of their office was near expired, by which means they were in office more than the regular time.

whilſt

whilſt Pelopidas was detained priſoner by Alexander the Pherean, this malignant faction had weight enough to exclude Epaminondas from the office of Polemarch or General, and to procure for two of their friends, the command of that army which was ſent to puniſh the tyrant for his treachery. But the new Generals made ſuch wretched work of it, when they came to face the enemy, that the whole army was quickly thrown into the utmoſt confuſion, and compelled for their own preſervation, to put Epaminondas at their head, who was preſent at the action only as a volunteer: for the malice of his enemies had excluded him from the leaſt ſhadow of truſt or power. This able man, by a manœuvre peculiar to himſelf, extricated the Theban troops out of thoſe difficulties in which the ignorance and incapacity of their generals had involved them, repulſed the enemy, and by a fine retreat brought the army ſafe to Thebes. His countrymen, now ſenſible of their error, and how greatly they had been impoſed upon by the faction, immediately recalled him to the higheſt offices in the ſtate, which he continued to execute 'till his death, with the greateſt honour to himſelf, and emolument as well as glory to his country. As the management of publick affairs, after the death of theſe two illuſtrious patriots, fell by

by the intrigues of faction into the hands of men of a quite different character, we need not wonder that the Thebans ſunk alike in power and reputation, 'till Thebes itſelf was totally deſtroyed by Alexander the Great; and their country, with the reſt of Greece, ſwallowed up at laſt by the inſatiable ambition of the Romans.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of CARTHAGE.

OF all the free ſtates whoſe memory is preſerved to us in hiſtory, Carthage bears the neareſt reſemblance to Britain, both in her commerce, opulence, ſovereignty of the ſea, and her method of carrying on her land wars by foreign mercenaries. If to theſe we add the vicinity of the Carthaginians to the Romans, the moſt formidable and moſt rapacious people at that time in Europe, and the ſpecifick difference, as I may term it, of the reſpective military force of each nation, the ſituation of Carthage with reſpect to Rome, ſeems greatly analogous to that of Britain with reſpect to France, at leaſt for this laſt century. Conſequently, the dreadful fate of that Republick, once the moſt flouriſhing ſtate in the univerſe, and the moſt formidable rival Rome ever had to cope with, muſt merit our higheſt attention at this juncture: both as the greatneſs of her power aroſe from, and was ſupported by commerce, and as ſhe owed her ruin more to her own inteſtine diviſions, than to the arms of the Romans.

We

We know very little of this opulent and powerful people 'till the time of the firſt Punick war. For as not one of their own hiſtorians has reached our times, we have no accounts of them but what are tranſmitted to us by their enemies. Such writers conſequently deſerve little credit, as well from their ignorance of the Carthaginian conſtitution, as their inveterate prejudice againſt that great people. Hence it is that we know ſo little of their laws, and have but an imperfect idea of their conſtitutional form of government.

The government of Carthage, if we may credit the judicious Ariſtotle, ſeems to have been founded on the wiſeſt maxims of policy. For he affirms, [1] the different branches of their legiſlature were ſo exactly balanced, that for the ſpace of five hundred years, from the commencement of the Republick down to his time, the repoſe of Carthage had never been diſturbed by any conſiderable ſedition, or her liberty invaded by any ſingle Tyrant: the two fatal evils to which every Republican government is daily liable, from the very nature of their conſtitution. An additional proof too may be drawn from this conſideration, that Carthage was able to ſupport herſelf upwards of ſeven hun-

[1] Ariſt. de Republ. lib. 2. cap. 9. lit. 4.

dred years in opulence and ſplendor in the midſt of ſo many powerful enemies, and during the greater part of that time, was the center of commerce of the known world, and enjoyed the uninterrupted ſovereignty of the ſea without a rival.

The genius of the Carthaginians was warlike as well as commercial, and affords undeniable proof, that thoſe qualities are by no means incompatible to the ſame people. It is almoſt impoſſible indeed to diſcover the real character of this great people. The Roman hiſtorians, their implacable enemies, conſtantly paint them in the blackeſt colours, to palliate the perfidious and mercileſs behaviour of their own countrymen towards that unfortunate Republick. A fact ſo notorious, that neither Livy nor any other of their writers, with all their art, were able to conceal it. The Greek hiſtorians, whoſe countrymen had ſuffered ſo greatly by the Carthaginian arms in Sicily and all the other iſlands in the Mediterranean, betray as ſtrong a prejudice againſt them as the Roman. Even the reſpectable Polybius, the only author amongſt them who deſerves any degree of credit, is plainly partial, when he ſpeaks of the Carthaginian manners. The Romans continually charge them with the want of publick faith, and have handed down the *Punica Fides* as a proverb. I ſhall take

take notice of this ſcandalous charge in another place, where I ſhall ſhew how much more juſtly it may be retorted upon the Romans.

As the deſire of gain is the chief ſpur to commerce, and as the greateſt men in Carthage never thought it beneath them to engage in that lucrative employment, all the hiſtorians have repreſented the whole body of the people as ſo inſatiably fond of amaſſing wealth, that they eſteemed even the loweſt and dirtieſt means lawful, that tended to the acquiſition of their darling object. " [1] Amongſt the Carthaginians," ſays Polybius, when he compares the manners of that people with thoſe of the Romans, " nothing was infamous that was attended with gain. [2] Amongſt the Romans nothing ſo infamous as bribery, and to enrich themſelves by unwarrantable means." [3] He adds, in proof of his aſſertion, that, " at Carthage all the dignities and higheſt employments in the State were openly ſold. A practice, he affirms, which at Rome was a capital crime." Yet but a few pages before, where he inveighs bitterly againſt the ſordid love of money, and rapacious ava-

[1] Polyb. lib. 6. p. 692.
[2] Id. ibid.
[3] Ibid.

rice of the Cretans, he remarks, that "they were the only people [1] in the world to whom no kind of gain appeared either infamous or unlawful." In [2] another place where he cenſures the Greeks for aſperſing Titus Flaminius the Roman General, as if he had not been proof againſt the gold of Macedon, he affirms, "that whilſt the Romans preſerved the virtuous manners of their fore-fathers, and had not yet carried their arms into foreign countries, not a ſingle man of them would have been guilty of a crime of that nature." But though he can boldly aſſert, as he ſays, "that in his time many of the Romans, if taken man by man, were able to preſerve the truſt repoſed in them inviolable as to that point, yet he owns he durſt not venture to ſay the ſame of all." Though he ſpeaks as modeſtly as he can to avoid giving offence, yet this hint is ſufficient to convince us, that corruption was neither new nor uncommon at that time amongſt the Romans. But as I ſhall reſume this ſubject in a more proper place, I ſhall only obſerve from Polybius's own detail of the hiſtory of the Carthaginians, That, unleſs when the intrigues of faction prevailed, all their great poſts were

[1] Polyb. lib. 6. p. 681.

[2] Excerpt. ex Polyb. de virtutibus et vitiis, p. 1426.

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generally filled by men of the moſt diſtinguiſhed merit.

The charge of cruelty is brought againſt them with a very ill grace by the Romans, who treated even Monarchs themſelves, if they were ſo unhappy as to become their priſoners of war, with the [1] utmoſt inhumanity, and threw them to periſh in dungeons, after they had expoſed them in triumph to the inſults of their own populace.

The ſtory indeed of Regulus has afforded a noble ſubject for Horace, which he has embelliſhed with ſome of the moſt beautiful ſtrokes of poetry; and that fine ode has propagated and confirmed the belief of it, more perhaps than the writings of all their hiſtorians. But as neither Polybius nor Diodorus Siculus make the leaſt mention of ſuch an event (though the Greeks bore an equal averſion to the Carthaginians), and as the Roman writers from whom we received it, differ greatly in their accounts of it, I cannot help joining in opinion with many learned men, that it was a Roman forgery.

The Greek writers accuſe them of barbariſm and a total ignorance of the Belles Lettres, the ſtudy of which was the reigning taſte of Greece. Rollin contemptuouſly

[1] Perſeus, &c.

affirms, that their education in general amounted to no more than writing and the knowledge of merchants accounts; that a Carthaginian Philoſopher would have been a prodigy amongſt the learned; and then aſks, "What would they have thought of a Geometrician or Aſtronomer of that nation?" Rollin ſeems to have put this queſtion too haſtily, ſince it is unanimouſly confeſſed, that they were the beſt ſhip-builders, the ableſt navigators, and the moſt ſkilful mechanicks at that time in the world: that they raiſed abundance of magnificent ſtructures, and very well underſtood the art of fortification; all which (eſpecially as the uſe of the compaſs was then unknown) muſt of neceſſity imply a more than common knowledge of Aſtronomy, Geometry, and every other branch of mathematicks. Let [1] me add too, that their knowledge in Agriculture was ſo eminent, that the works of Mago the Carthaginian upon that ſubject were ordered to be tranſlated by a decree of the Senate, for the uſe of the Romans and their colonies.

That the education of their youth was not confined to the mercantile part only, muſt be evident from that number of great men, who make ſuch a figure in their hiſtory; particularly Hannibal, perhaps the greateſt

[1] Varro,

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Captain which any age has ever yet produced, and at the ſame time the moſt conſummate Stateſman, and diſintereſted Patriot. Painting, Sculpture, and Poetry, they ſeem to have left to their more idle and more luxurious neighbours the Greeks, and applied their wealth to the infinitely nobler uſes of ſupporting their marine, enlarging and protecting their commerce and colonies. What opinion even the wiſer part of the Romans had of theſe ſpecious arts, and how unworthy they judged them of the cloſe attention of a brave and free people, we may learn from the advice which [1] Virgil gives his countrymen by the mouth of his Hero's father Anchiſes. I have endeavoured here to clear the much injured character of this great people from the aſperſions and groſs miſrepreſentations of hiſtorians, by proofs drawn from the conceſſions and ſelf-contradictions of the hiſtorians themſelves.

The State of Carthage bears ſo near a reſemblance to that of our own nation, both in their conſtitution (as far as we are able to judge of it) maritime power, commerce,

[1] Excudent alii ſpirantia mollius æra:
Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus.
Virg. Æneid. lib. 6.
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento
(Hæ tibi erunt artes) pacique imponere morem
Parcere ſubjectis, &c. Ibid.

party diviſions, and long as well as bloody war which they carried on with the moſt powerful nation in the univerſe, that their hiſtory, I again repeat it, affords us, in my judgment, more uſeful rules for our preſent conduct than that of any other ancient Republick. As we are engaged in a war (which was till very lately unſucceſsful) with an enemy, leſs powerful indeed, but equally rapacious as the Romans, and acting upon the ſame principles, we ought moſt carefully to beware of thoſe falſe ſteps both in war and policy, which brought on the ruin of the Carthaginians. For ſhould we be ſo unhappy as to be compelled to receive law from that haughty nation, we muſt expect to be reduced to the ſame wretched ſituation in which the Romans left Carthage at the concluſion of the ſecond Punick war. This iſland has been hitherto the inexpugnable barrier of the liberties of Europe, and is as much the object of the jealouſy and hatred of the French, as ever Carthage was of the Romans. As they are ſenſible that nothing but the deſtruction of this country can open them a way to their grand project of univerſal monarchy, we may be certain that *Delenda eſt Britannia* will be as much the popular maxim at Paris, as *Delenda eſt Carthago* was at Rome.——But I ſhall wave theſe reflections at preſent, and point out the real

real cauſes of the total ruin of that powerful Republick.

Carthage took its riſe from a handful of diſtreſſed Tyrians who ſettled in that country, by permiſſion of the natives, like our colonies in America, and actually paid a kind of rent, under the name of tribute, for the very ground on which their city was founded. As they brought with them the commercial genius of their mother-country, they ſoon arrived at ſuch a ſtate of opulence by their frugality and indefatigable induſtry, as occaſioned the envy of their poorer neighbours. Thus jealouſy on the one hand, and pride naturally ariſing from great wealth on the other, quickly involved them in a war. The natives juſtly feared the growing power of the Carthaginians, and the latter feeling their own ſtrength, wanted to throw off the yoke of tribute, which they looked upon as diſhonourable, and even galling to a free people. The conteſt was by no means equal. The neighbouring princes were poor, and divided by ſeparate intereſts; the Carthaginians were rich, and united in one common cauſe. Their commerce made them maſters of the ſea, and their wealth enabled them to bribe one part of their neighbours to fight againſt the other; and thus by playing one againſt the other alternately, they reduced all at laſt to be their tri-

tributaries, and extended their dominions near two thouſand miles upon that continent. It may be objected that the conduct of the Carthaginians in this caſe was highly criminal. I grant it: but if we view all thoſe maſter-ſtrokes of policy, and all thoſe ſplendid conqueſts which ſhine ſo much in hiſtory, in their true colours, they will appear to be nothing more than fraud and robbery, gilded over with thoſe pompous appellations. Did not every nation that makes a figure in hiſtory riſe to Empire upon the ruin of their neighbours? Did not France acquire her preſent formidable power, and is ſhe not at this time endeavouring to worm us out of our American ſettlements by the very ſame means? But though the motives are not to be juſtified, yet the conduct of the Carthaginians upon theſe occaſions, will afford us ſome very uſeful and inſtructive leſſons in our preſent ſituation.

It is evident that the mighty power of theſe people was founded in and ſupported by commerce, and that they owed their vaſt acquiſitions, which extended down both ſides of the Mediterranean quite into the main ocean, to a right application of the publick money, and a proper exertion of their naval force. Had they bounded their views to this ſingle point, viz. the ſupport of their

commerce and colonies, they either would not have given ſuch terrible umbrage to the Romans, who, as Polybius obſerves, could brook no equal, or might ſafely have bid defiance to their utmoſt efforts. For the immenſe ſums which they ſquandered away in ſubſidies to ſo many foreign Princes, and to ſupport ſuch numerous armies of foreign mercenaries, which they conſtantly kept in pay, to compleat the reduction of Spain and Sicily, would have enabled them to cover their coaſts with ſuch a fleet as would have ſecured them from any apprehenſion of foreign invaſions. Beſides, the Roman genius was ſo little turned for maritime affairs, that at the time of their firſt breach with Carthage, they were not maſters of one ſingle ſhip of war, and were ſuch abſolute ſtrangers to the mechaniſm of a ſhip, that a Carthaginian galley driven by accident on their coaſts gave them the firſt notion of a model. But the ambition of Carthage grew as her wealth encreaſed; and how difficult a taſk is it to ſet bounds to that reſtleſs paſſion! Thus by graſping at too much, ſhe loſt all. It is not probable therefore that the Romans would ever have attempted to diſturb any of the Carthaginian ſettlements, when the whole coaſt of Italy lay open to the inſults and depredations of ſo formidable a maritime power.

power. The Romans felt this ſo ſenſibly in the beginning of the firſt Punick war, that they never reſted till they had acquired the ſuperiority at ſea. It is evident too, that the Romans always maintained that ſuperiority: For if Hannibal could poſſibly have paſſed by ſea into Italy, ſo able a general would never have harraſſed his troops by that long and ſeemingly impoſſible march over the Alps, which coſt him above half his army; an expedition which has been, and ever will be the wonder of all ſucceeding ages. Nor could Scipio have landed without oppoſition ſo very near the city of Carthage itſelf, if the maritime force of that people had not been at the very loweſt ebb.

The Carthaginians were certainly greatly weakened by the long continuance of their firſt war with the Romans, and that ſavage and deſtructive war with their own mercenaries, which followed immediately after. They ought therefore in true policy, to have turned their whole attention, during the interval between the firſt and ſecond Punick wars, to the re-eſtabliſhment of their marine; but the conqueſt of Spain was their favourite object, and their finances were too much reduced to be ſufficient for both. Thus they expended that money in carrying on a continental war, which would have put their marine

marine on ſo formidable a footing, as to have enabled them to regain once more the dominion of the ſea; and the fatal event of the ſecond Punick war convinced them of the falſe ſtep they had taken, when it was too late to retrieve it.

I have here pointed out one capital error of the Carthaginians as a maritime power, I mean their engaging in too frequent, and too extenſive wars on the continent of Europe, and their neglect of their marine. I ſhall now mention another, which more than once brought them to the very brink of deſtruction. This was—their conſtantly employing ſuch a vaſt number of foreign mercenary troops, and not truſting the defence of their country, nay not even Carthage itſelf wholly, to their own native ſubjects.

The Carthaginians were ſo entirely devoted to commerce, that they ſeem to have looked upon every native employed in their armies as a member loſt to the community; and their wealth enabled them to buy whatever number of ſoldiers they pleaſed from their neighbouring States in Greece and Africa, who traded (as I may term it) in war as much as the Swiſs and Germans do now, and were equally ready to ſell the blood and lives of their ſubjects to the beſt bidder. From hence they drew ſuch inexhauſtible ſup-

ſupplies of men, both to form and recruit their armies, whilſt their own natives were at leiſure to follow the more lucrative occupations of navigation, huſbandry, and mechanick trades. For the number of native Carthaginians, which we read of, in any of their armies, was ſo extremely ſmall, as to bear no proportion to that of their foreign mercenaries. This kind of policy, which prevails ſo generally in all mercantile States, does, I confeſs, at firſt ſight appear extremely plauſible. The Carthaginians, by this method, ſpared their own people, and purchaſed all their conqueſts by the venal blood of foreigners; and, in caſe of a defeat, they could with great eaſe and expedition recruit their broken armies with any number of good troops, ready trained up to their hands in military diſcipline. But, alas! theſe advantages were greatly over-balanced by very fatal inconveniences. The foreign troops were attached to the Carthaginians by no tye but that of their pay. Upon the leaſt failure of that, or if they were not humoured in all their licentious demands, they were juſt as ready to turn their arms againſt the throats of their maſters. Strangers to that heart-felt affection, that enthuſiaſtick love of their country, which warms the hearts of free citizens, and fires them with the glorious emulation of fighting to the laſt drop of blood in de-

defence of their common mother; theſe ſordid hirelings were always ripe for mutiny and ſedition, and ever ready to revolt and change ſides upon the leaſt proſpect of greater advantages.

But a ſhort detail of the calamities which they drew upon themſelves by this miſtaken policy, will better ſhew the dangers which attend the admiſſion of foreign mercenaries into any country, where the natives are unaccuſtomed to the uſe of arms. A practice which is too apt to prevail in commercial nations.

At the concluſion of the firſt Punick war the Carthaginians were compelled, by their treaty with the Romans, to evacuate Sicily. Geſco, therefore, who then commanded in that Iſland, to prevent the diſorders which might be committed by ſuch a multitude of deſperate fellows, compoſed of ſo many different nations, and ſo long inured to blood and rapine, ſent them over gradually in ſmall bodies, that his countrymen might have time to pay off their arrears, and ſend them home to their reſpective countries. But either the lowneſs of their finances, or the ill-timed parſimony of the Carthaginians totally [1] defeated this ſalutary meaſure, though the wiſeſt that, as their affairs were at that time

[1] Polyb. lib. 1. p. 92—3.

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circumſtanced, could poſſibly have been taken. The Carthaginians deferred their payment till the arrival of the whole body, in hopes of obtaining ſome abatement in their demands, by fairly laying before them the neceſſities of the publick. But the mercenaries were deaf to every repreſentation and propoſal of that nature. They felt their own ſtrength, and ſaw too plainly the weakneſs of their maſters. As faſt as one demand was agreed to, a more unreaſonable one was ſtarted; and they threatened to do themſelves juſtice by military execution, if their exorbitant demands were not immediately complied with. At laſt, when they were juſt at the point of an accommodation with their maſters, by the mediation and addreſs of Geſco, two deſperate ruffians, named [1] Speudius and Mathos, raiſed ſuch a flame amongſt this unruly multitude, as broke out inſtantly into the moſt bloody, and deſtructive war ever yet recorded in hiſtory. The account we have of it from the Greek hiſtorians muſt ſtrike the moſt callous breaſt with horror; and though it was at laſt happily terminated by the ſuperior conduct of Hamilcar Barcas, the father of the great Hannibal, yet it continued near four years, and left the territories around Carthage a moſt ſhocking ſcene of blood and

[1] Polyb. p. 98—9.

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devaſtation. Such was, and ever will be the conſequence, when a large body of mercenary troops is admitted into the heart of a rich and fertile country, where the bulk of the people are denied the uſe of arms by the miſtaken policy of their governors. For this was actually the caſe with the Carthaginians, where the total diſuſe of arms amongſt the lower claſs of people, laid that opulent country open, an eaſy and tempting prey to every invader. This was another capital error, and conſequently another cauſe which contributed to their ruin.

How muſt any nation but our own, which with reſpect to the bulk of the people, lies in the ſame defenceleſs ſituation; how, I ſay, muſt they cenſure the mighty State of Carthage, ſpreading terror, and giving law to the moſt diſtant nations by her powerful fleets, when they ſee her at the ſame time trembling, and giving herſelf up for loſt at the landing of any invader in her own territories?

The conduct of that petty prince Agathocles, affords us a ſtriking inſtance of the defenceleſs ſtate of the territories of Carthage. The Carthaginians were at that very time maſters of all Sicily, except the ſingle city of Syracuſe, in which they had cooped up that tyrant both by land and ſea. [1] Aga-

[1] Diodor. Sicul. lib. 20. p. 735—36.

thocles, reduced to the laſt extremity, ſtruck perhaps the boldeſt ſtroke ever yet met with in hiſtory. He was perfectly well acquainted with the weak ſide of Carthage, and knew that he could meet with little oppoſition from a people who were ſtrangers to the uſe of arms, and enervated by a life of eaſe and plenty. On this defect of their policy he founded his hopes; and the event proved that he was not miſtaken in his judgment. He embarked with only 13000 men on board the few ſhips he had remaining, eluded the vigilance of the Carthaginian fleet by ſtratagem, landed ſafely in Africa, plundered and ravaged that rich country up to the very gates of Carthage, which he cloſely blocked up, and reduced nearly to the ſituation in which he had left his own Syracuſe. Nothing could equal the terror into which the city of Carthage was thrown at that time, but the panick which, in the late rebellion, ſtruck the much larger, and more populous city of London, at the approach of a poor handful of Highlanders, as much inferior even to the ſmall army of Agathocles in number, as they were in arms and diſcipline. The ſucceſs of that able leader compelled the Carthaginians to recall part of their forces out of Sicily to the immediate defence of Carthage itſelf; and this occaſioned the raiſing the ſiege of Syracuſe, and ended in the total defeat of their army,

army, and death of their General in that country. Thus Agathocles, by this daring meaſure, ſaved his own petty State, and, after a variety of good and ill fortune, concluded a treaty with the Carthaginians, and died at Syracuſe at a time when, from a thorough experience of their defenceleſs ſtate at home, he was preparing for a freſh invaſion.

[1] Livy informs us, that this very meaſure of Agathocles ſet the precedent which Scipio followed with ſo much ſucceſs in the ſecond Punick war, when that able General, by a ſimilar deſcent in Africa, compelled the Carthaginians to recall Hannibal out of Italy to their immediate aſſiſtance, and reduced them to that impotent ſtate, from which they never afterwards were able to recover. How ſucceſsfully the French played the ſame game upon us, when they obliged us to recall our forces out of Flanders to cruſh the Rebellion, which they had ſpirited up with that very view, is a fact too recent to need any mention of particulars. How lately did they drive us to the expence, and I may ſay the ignominy, of fetching over a large body of foreign mercenaries for the immediate defence of this nation, which plumes herſelf ſo much upon her power and bravery? How

[1] Livy, lib. 28. p. 58—9.

greatly did they cramp all our meaſures, how much did they confine all our military operations to our own immediate ſelf-defence, and prevent us from ſending ſufficient ſuccours to our colonies by the perpetual alarm of an invaſion?

Though we may in part truly aſcribe the ruin of Carthage to the two above-mentioned errors in their policy, yet the cauſe which was productive of the greateſt evils, and conſequently the more immediate object of our attention at this dangerous juncture, was party diſunion; that bane of every free State, from which our own country has equal reaſon to apprehend the ſame direful effects, as the Republicks of Greece, Rome, and Carthage experienced formerly.

By all the lights, which we receive from hiſtory, the State of Carthage was divided into two oppoſite factions; the Hannonian and the Barcan, ſo denominated from their reſpective leaders, who were heads of the two moſt powerful families in Carthage. The Hannonian family ſeems to have made the greateſt figure in the ſenate; the Barcan in the field. Both were ſtrongly actuated by ambition, but ambition of a different kind. The Barcan family ſeems to have had no other object in view but the glory of their country, and were always ready to give up their private animoſities, and even their paſ-

ſion for military glory to the publick good. The Hannonian family acted from quite oppoſite principles, conſtantly aiming at one point; the ſupporting themſelves in power, and that only. Ever jealous of the glory acquired by the Barcan family, they perpetually thwarted every meaſure propoſed from that quarter, and were equally ready to ſacrifice the honour and real intereſt of their country to that ſelfiſh view. In ſhort, the one family ſeems to have produced a race of Heroes, the other of ambitious Stateſmen.

The chiefs of theſe two jarring families, beſt known to us in hiſtory, were Hanno and Hamilcar Barcas, who was ſucceeded by his ſon Hannibal, that terror of the Romans. The oppoſition between theſe two parties was ſo flagrant, that Appian does not ſcruple to call the party of [1] Hanno, the Roman faction; and that of Barcas, the popular, or the Carthaginian, from the different intereſts which each party eſpouſed.

The firſt inſtance, which we meet with in hiſtory, of the enmity ſubſiſting between the heads of theſe factions, was in that deſtructive war with the mercenaries, from which I have made this explanatory digreſſion.

Hanno was firſt ſent with a powerful, and well provided army againſt theſe mutinous

[1] Appian, de Bell. Punic. p. 36.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

deſperado's; but he knew little of his trade, and made perpetual blunders. [1] Polybius, who treats his character, as a ſoldier, with the utmoſt contempt, informs us, that he ſuffered himſelf to be ſurprized, a great part of his fine army to be cut to pieces, and his camp taken, with all the military ſtores, engines, and all the other apparatus of war.

The Carthaginians, terrified and diſtreſſed by the bad conduct of their General, were now compelled, by the neceſſity of their affairs, to reſtore Hamilcar to the chief command of their forces, from which he muſt have been excluded before by the influence of the Hannonian faction. That able commander with his ſmall army (for his whole force amounted to no more than ten thouſand men) quickly changed the face of the war, defeated Spendius in two pitched battles, and puſhed every advantage to the utmoſt, which the incapacity of the rebel Generals threw in his way. Senſible that he was too weak alone to cope with the united forces of the Rebels (which amounted to 70,000 men) he [2] ordered Hanno (who had ſtill influence enough to procure himſelf to be continued in the command of a ſeparate body) to join him, that they might finiſh this execrable

[1] Polyb. lib. 1. p. 104—5.

[2] Ibid. lib. 1, p. 115.

war

war by one deciſive action. After they were joined, the Carthaginians ſoon felt the fatal effects of diſunion between their Generals. No plan could now be followed, [1] no meaſure could be agreed on; and the diſagreement between theſe two leading men aroſe to ſuch a height at laſt, that they not only let ſlip every opportunity of annoying the enemy, but gave them many advantages againſt themſelves, which they could not otherwiſe have hoped for. [2] The Carthaginians, ſenſible of their error, and knowing the very different abilities of the two Generals, yet willing to avoid the imputation of partiality, empowered the army to decide which of the two they judged moſt proper for their General, as they were determined to continue only one of them in the command. [3] The deciſion of the army was, that Hamilcar ſhould take the ſupreme command, and that Hanno ſhould depart the camp. A convincing proof that they threw the whole blame of that diſunion, and the ill-ſucceſs, which was the conſequence of it, entirely upon the envy and jealouſy of Hanno. One Hannibal, a man more tractable, and more agreeable to Hamilcar, was ſent in his room. Union was

[1] Polyb. lib. 1. p. 115.
[2] Id. ibid.
[3] Idem ibid. 117.

reſtored, and the happy effects which attended it were quickly viſible. Hamilcar now puſhed on the war with his uſual vigilance and activity, and ſoon convinced the Generals of the Rebels how greatly he was their maſter in the art of war. He harraſſed them perpetually, and, like a ſkilful [1] gameſter, (as Polybius terms him) drew them artfully every day into his ſnares, and obliged them to raiſe the ſiege of Carthage. At laſt he cooped up Spendius with his army in ſo diſadvantageous a place, that he reduced them to ſuch an extremity of famine as to devour one another, and compelled them to ſurrender at diſcretion, though they were upwards of 40,000 effective men.—The army of Hamilcar, which was much inferior to that of Spendius in number, was compoſed partly of mercenaries and deſerters, partly of the city militia, [2] both horſe and foot (troops which the enemies to the militia bill would have called raw and undiſciplined, and treated as uſeleſs) of which the major part of his army conſiſted. The rebel army was compoſed chiefly of brave and experienced veterans, trained up by Hamilcar himſelf in Sicily during the late war with the Romans, whoſe courage was heightened

[1] Polyb. Ἀγαθὸς πεττευτὴς, ibid. p. 119.

[2] Id. ibid. Πολιτικὰς ἱππεῖς καὶ πεζὰς. p. 120.

by

by deſpair. It is worthy our obſervation therefore, that theſe very men who, under the conduct of Hamilcar, had been a terror to the Romans, and given them ſo many blows in Sicily towards the latter end of the firſt Punick war, ſhould yet be ſo little able to cope with an army ſo much inferior in number, and compoſed in a great meaſure of city militia only, when commanded by the ſame General. [1] Polybius, who eſteems Hamilcar by far the greateſt Captain of that age, obſerves, that though the Rebels were by no means inferior to the Carthaginian troops in reſolution and bravery, yet they were frequently beaten by Hamilcar by mere dint of Generalſhip. Upon this occaſion he cannot help remarking [2] the vaſt ſuperiority which judicious ſkill and ability of Generalſhip has over long military practice, where this ſo eſſentially neceſſary ſkill and judgment is wanting. It might have been thought unpardonable in me, if I had omitted this juſt remark of Polybius, ſince it has been ſo lately verified by his Pruſſian Majeſty in thoſe maſterly ſtrokes of Generalſhip, which are the preſent admiration of Europe. Hamilcar, after the deſtruction of Spendius and his army, immediately blocked up Mathos, with the remaining corps of the Rebels, in

[1] Polyb. lib. 1. p. 119.
[2] Id. ibid.

the

the city of Tunes. Hannibal, with the forces under his command, took poſt on that ſide of the city which looked towards Carthage. Hamilcar prepared to make his attack on the ſide which was directly oppoſite; but the conduct of Hannibal, when left to himſelf, was the direct contraſt to that of Hamilcar, and proves undeniably, that the whole merit of their former ſucceſs was entirely owing to that abler General. Hannibal, who ſeems to have been little acquainted with the true genius of thoſe daring veterans, lay ſecure, and careleſs in his camp, neglected his out-guards, and treated the enemy with contempt, as a people already conquered. [1] But Mathos obſerving the negligence and ſecurity of Hannibal, and well knowing that he had not Hamilcar to deal with, made a ſudden and reſolute ſally, forced Hannibal's entrenchments, put great numbers of his men to the ſword, took Hannibal himſelf, with ſeveral other perſons of diſtinction, priſoners, and pillaged his camp. This daring meaſure was ſo well concerted, and executed with ſo much rapidity, that Mathos, who made good uſe of his time, had done his buſineſs before Hamilcar, who lay encamped at ſome diſtance, was in the leaſt apprized of his colleague's misfortune.

[1] Polyb. id. ibid. p. 121.

Ma-

Mathos faſtened Hannibal, whilſt alive, on the ſame gibbet to which Hamilcar had lately nailed the body of Spendius: A terrible, but juſt reward for the ſhameful careleſſneſs in a commanding officer, who had ſacrificed the lives of ſuch a number of his fellow-citizens by his own indolence and preſumptuous folly. Mathos alſo crucified thirty of the firſt nobility of Carthage, who attended Hannibal in this expedition. A commander who is ſurprized in the night-time, though guilty of an egregious fault, may yet plead ſomething in excuſe; but, in point of diſcipline, for a General to be ſurprized by an enemy juſt under his noſe in open day-light, and caught in a ſtate of wanton ſecurity, from an overweening preſumption on his own ſtrength, is a crime of ſo capital a nature as to admit neither of alleviation nor pardon. This dreadful and unexpected blow threw Carthage into the utmoſt conſternation, and obliged Hamilcar to draw off his part of the army to a conſiderable diſtance from Tunes. Hanno had again influence enough to procure the command, which he was compelled before by the army to give up to Hamilcar. But the Carthaginians, ſenſible of the fatal conſequences of diſunion between the two Generals, eſpecially at ſuch a deſperate criſis, ſent [1] thirty

[1] Polyb. lib. 1. p. 122.

of

of the moſt reſpectable amongſt the Senators to procure a thorough reconcilation between Hamilcar and Hanno before they proceeded upon any operation; which they effected at laſt, though not without difficulty. Pleaſed with this happy event, the Carthaginians (as their laſt, and utmoſt effort) ſent [1] every man in Carthage, who was able to bear arms, to reinforce Hamilcar, on whoſe ſuperior abilities they placed their whole dependance. Hamilcar now reſumed his operations, and, as he was no longer thwarted by Hanno, ſoon reduced Mathos to the neceſſity of putting the whole iſſue of the war upon one deciſive action, in which the Carthaginians were moſt compleatly victors, by the exquiſite diſpoſition and conduct of Hamilcar.

I hope the enemies to a militia will at leaſt allow theſe new levies, who compoſed by far the greateſt part of Hamilcar's army upon this occaſion, to be raw, undiſciplined, and ignorant of the uſe of arms; epithets which they beſtow ſo plentifully upon a militia. Yet that able commander, with an army conſiſting chiefly of this kind of men, totally deſtroyed an army of deſperate veterans, took their General, and all who eſcaped the ſlaughter, priſoners, and put an end to the moſt

[1] Τὰς ὑπολοίπας τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἡλικίαις καθοπλίσαντες (οἷον ἔσχάτην τρέχοντες ταύτην) ἐξαπεστέλλον πρὸς τὸν Βάρκαν. Polyb. lib. 1. p. 122.

ruinous,

ruinous, and moſt inhuman war ever yet mentioned in hiſtory. Theſe new levies had courage (a quality never yet, I believe, diſputed to the Britiſh commonalty) and were to fight *pro aris et focis*, for whatever was dear and valuable to a people; and Hamilcar, who well knew how to make the proper uſe of theſe diſpoſitions of his countrymen, was maſter of thoſe abilities which Mathos wanted. Of ſuch infinite advantage is it to an army to have a commander ſuperior to the enemy in the art of Generalſhip; an advantage which frequently ſupplies a deficiency even in the goodneſs of troops, as well as in numbers.

The enmity of Hanno did not expire with Hamilcar, who fell glorioufly in the ſervice of his country, in Spain ſome years after. Hannibal, the eldeſt ſon, and a ſon worthy of ſo heroic a father, immediately became the object of his jealouſy and hatred. For when Aſdrubal (ſon-in-law to Hamilcar) had been appointed to the command of the army in Spain, after the death of that General, he deſired that Hannibal, at that time but twentwo years of age, might be ſent to Spain to be trained up under him in the art of war. Hanno oppoſed this with the utmoſt virulence in a rancorous ſpeech (made for him by Livy) fraught with the moſt infamous inſinuations againſt Aſdrubal, and a ſtrong charge of ambition againſt the Barcan family.

ly. But his malice, and the true reaſon of his oppoſition, varniſhed over with a ſpecious concern for the publick welfare, were ſo eaſily ſeen through, that he was not able to carry a point, which he ſo much wiſhed for.

[1] Aſdrubal not long after being aſſaſſinated by a Gaul, in revenge for ſome injury he had received, the army immediately appointed Hannibal to the command; and ſending advice to Carthage of what they had done, the Senate was aſſembled, who [2] unanimouſly confirmed the election then made by the ſoldiers. Hannibal in a ſhort time reduced all that part of Spain which lay between New Carthage, and the river Iberus, except the city of Saguntum, which was in alliance with the Romans. But as he inherited his father's hatred to the Romans, for their [3] infamous behaviour to his country at the concluſion of the war with the mercenaries, he made great preparations for the ſiege of Saguntum. The Romans (according to [4] Polybius) receiving intelligence of his deſign, ſent ambaſſadors to him at New Carthage, who warned him of the conſequences of either attacking the Saguntines, or croſſing the Iberus, which, by the treaty with Aſdrubal, had been made the boundary of the

[1] Polyb. lib. 2. p. 172.

[2] Μια γνώμη. Polyb. lib. 3. p. 234.

[3] This will be explained in another place.

[4] Lib. 3. p. 236.

Car-

Carthaginian and Roman dominions in that country. Hannibal acknowledged his reſolution to proceed againſt Saguntum; but the reaſons he aſſigned for his conduct were ſo unſatisfactory to the ambaſſadors, that they croſſed over to Carthage to know the reſolution of their Senate upon that ſubject. Hannibal in the mean time, according to the ſame [1] author, ſent advice to Carthage of this Embaſſy, and deſired inſtructions how to act, complaining heavily that the Saguntines depending upon their alliance with the Romans, committed frequent depredations upon the Carthaginian ſubjects.

We may conclude that the ambaſſadors met with as diſagreeable a reception from the Carthaginian Senate as they had done from Hannibal, and that he received orders from Carthage to proceed in his intended expedition. For [2] Polybius, reflecting upon ſome writers, who pretended to relate what paſſed in the Roman Senate when the news arrived of the capture of Saguntum, and even inſerted the debates which aroſe when the queſtion was put, whether, or no, war ſhould be declared againſt Carthage, treats their whole accounts as abſurd and fictitious. "For how, ſays he, with indignation, could it

[1] Id. ibid. p. 237.
[2] Polyb. lib. 3. p. 243—44.

poſſibly

poſſibly be, that the Romans, who had denounced war the year before at Carthage, if Hannibal ſhould invade the Saguntine territories, ſhould now after that city was taken by ſtorm, aſſemble to deliberate whether war ſhould be commenced againſt the Carthaginians or not." Now as this declaration of war was conditional, and not to take place unleſs Hannibal ſhould attack the Saguntines, it muſt have been made before that event happened, and conſequently muſt be referred to the Embaſſy above mentioned. And as Hannibal undertook the ſiege of Saguntum notwithſtanding the Roman menaces, he undoubtedly acted by orders from the Carthaginian Senate.

When the Romans received the news of the deſtruction of Saguntum, they diſpatched another Embaſſy to Carthage (as [1] Polybius relates) with the utmoſt expedition; their orders were to inſiſt that Hannibal and all who adviſed him to commit hoſtilities againſt the Saguntines ſhould be delivered up to the Romans, and in caſe of a refuſal, to declare immediate war. The demand was received by the Carthaginian Senate with the utmoſt indignation, and one of the Senators, who was appointed to ſpeak in the name of the reſt, begun in an artful ſpeech

[1] Polyb. id. ibid.

to

to recriminate upon the Romans, and offered to prove, that the Saguntines were not allied to the Romans when the peace was made between the two nations, and conſequently could not be included in the treaty. But the Romans cut the affair ſhort, and told them that they did not come there to diſpute, but only to inſiſt upon a categorical anſwer to this plain queſtion: Whether they would give up the authors of the hoſtilities, which would convince the world that they had no ſhare in the deſtruction of Saguntum, but that Hannibal had done it without their authority; or, whether by protecting them, they choſe to confirm the Romans in the belief, that Hannibal had acted with their approbation? As their demand of Hannibal was refuſed, war [1] was declared by the Romans, and accepted with equal alacrity and fierceneſs by the majority of the Carthaginian Senate.

Livy [2] affirms that the firſt Embaſſy was decreed by the Roman Senate, but not ſent 'till Hannibal had actually inveſted Saguntum, and varies from Polybius in his relation of the particulars. For according to [3] Livy,

[1] Polyb. lib. 3. p. 259.
[2] Livy, lib. 21. p. 132.
[3] Ib. p. 135.

Hannibal received intelligence of the Roman Embaſſy, but he ſent them word, that he had other buſineſs upon his hands at that time than to give audience to ambaſſadors; and that he wrote at the ſame time to his friends of the Barcan faction to exert themſelves, and prevent the other party from carrying any point in favour of the Romans.

The ambaſſadors, thus denied admittance by Hannibal, repaired to Carthage, and laid their demands before the Senate. Upon this occaſion Livy [1] introduces Hanno inveighing bitterly in a formal harangue againſt the ſending Hannibal into Spain, a meaſure which he foretels, muſt terminate in the utter deſtruction of Carthage. And after teſtifying his joy for the death of his father Hamilcar, whom he acknowledges he moſt cordially hated, as he did the whole Barcan family, whom he terms the firebrands of the State, he adviſes them to give up Hannibal, and make full ſatisfaction for the injury then done to the Saguntines. [2] When Hanno had done ſpeaking, there was no occaſion, as Livy obſerves, for a reply. For almoſt all the Senate were ſo entirely in the intereſt of Hannibal, that they accuſed Hanno of declaiming againſt him with more bitterneſs

[1] Liv. lib. 21. p. 135, 36.
[2] Id. ibid.

and

and rancour than even the Roman ambaſſadors, who were diſmiſſed with this ſhort anſwer, "That not Hannibal, but the Saguntines, were the authors of the war, and that the Romans treated them with great injuſtice, if they preferred the friendſhip of the Saguntines before that of their moſt ancient allies the Carthaginians." Livy's [1] account of the ſecond Embaſſy, which followed the deſtruction of Saguntum, differs ſo very little from that of Polybius, both as to the queſtion put by the Romans, the anſwer given by the Carthaginian Senate, and the declaration of war which was the conſequence, that it is needleſs to repeat it.

If what Hanno ſaid in the ſpeech abovementioned, had been his real ſentiments from any conſciouſneſs of the ſuperior power of the Romans, and the imprudence of engaging in a war of that conſequence before his country had recovered her former ſtrength, he would have acted upon principles worthy of an honeſt and prudent Patriot. For [2] Polybius, after enumerating the ſuperior excellencies of Hannibal as a General, is ſtrongly of opinion, that if he had begun with other nations, and left the Romans for his laſt enterprize, he would certainly have ſuc-

[1] Liv. lib. 3. p. 142—43.
[2] Polyb. lib. 11. p. 888—89.

ceeded in whatever he had attempted againſt them, but he miſcarried by attacking thoſe firſt, whom he ought to have reſerved for his laſt enterprize. The ſubſequent behaviour of Hanno, during the whole time that Italy was the ſeat of war, evidently proves, that his oppoſition to this war proceeded entirely from party motives, and his perſonal hatred to the Barcan family, conſequently is by no means to be aſcribed to any regard for the true intereſt of his country. [1] Appian informs us, that when Fabius had greatly ſtreightened Hannibal by his cautious conduct, the Carthaginian General ſent a preſſing meſſage to Carthage for a large ſupply both of men and money. But, according to that author, he was flatly refuſed, and could obtain neither, by the influence of his enemies, who were averſe to that war, and cavilled perpetually at every enterprize which Hannibal undertook. [2] Livy, in his relation of the account which Hannibal ſent to the Carthaginian Senate of his glorious victory at Cannæ by his brother Mago, with the demand for a large reinforcement of men as well as money, introduces Hanno (in a ſpeech of his own which he gives us on that occaſion) ſtrongly oppoſing that mo-

[1] Appian. de Bell. Annib. 323. Edit. Hen. Steph.
[2] Lib. 23. p. 265—66.

tion,

tion, and perſiſting ſtill in his former ſentiments in reſpect both to the war and to Hannibal. But the Carthaginians, elate with that victory, which was the greateſt blow the Romans ever received in the field ſince the foundation of their Republick, and thoroughly ſenſible (as Livy informs us) of the enmity which Hanno and his faction bore to the Barcan family, immediately decreed a ſupply of 40,000 Numidians, and 24,000 foot and horſe to be immediately levied in Spain, beſides Elephants, and a very large ſum of money. Though Hanno at that time had not weight enough in the Senate to prevent that decree, yet he had influence enough by his intrigues to retard the ſupply then voted, and not only to get it reduced to 12,000 foot and 2500 horſe, but even to procure that ſmall number to be ſent to Spain upon a different ſervice. That Hanno was the true cauſe of this cruel diſappointment, and the fatal conſequences which attended it, is equally evident from the ſame hiſtorian. For [1] Livy tells us, "that when orders were ſent to him by the Carthaginian Senate to quit Italy, and haſten to the immediate defence of his own country, Hannibal inveighed bitterly againſt the malice of his enemies, who now openly and avowedly recalled him

[1] Liv. lib. 30. p. 135.

from Italy, out of which they had long before endeavoured to drag him, when they tied up his hands by conſtantly refuſing him any ſupply either of men or money. That Hannibal affirmed he was not conquered by the Romans, whom he had ſo often defeated, but by the calumny and envy of the oppoſite faction in the Senate. That Scipio would not have ſo much reaſon to plume himſelf upon the ignominy of his return, as his enemy Hanno, who was ſo implacably bent upon the deſtruction of the Barcan family, that ſince he was not able to cruſh it by any other means, he had at laſt accompliſhed it, though by the ruin of Carthage itſelf."

Had that large ſupply been ſent to Hannibal with the ſame unanimity and diſpatch with which it was voted, it is more than probable, that ſo conſummate a General would have ſoon been maſter of Rome, and transferred the Empire of the world to Carthage. For the Romans were ſo exhauſted after the terrible defeat at Cannæ, that [1] Livy is of opinion, that Hannibal would have given the finiſhing blow to that Republick, if he had marched directly to Rome from the field of battle, as he was adviſed to do by his General of horſe Maherbal: that many of the nobility, upon

[1] Lib. 22. p. 240.

the

the firſt news of this fatal event, were in actual conſultation about the means of quitting Italy, and looking out for a ſettlement in ſome other part of the world; and he affirms, that the ſafety both of the city and empire of Rome muſt be attributed (as it was then firmly believed at Rome) to the delay of that ſingle day only, on which Maherbal gave that advice to Hannibal. [1] Appian confirms the diſtreſsful ſituation of the Roman affairs at that juncture, and informs us, that including the ſlaughter at Cannæ, in which the Romans had loſt moſt of their ableſt officers, Hannibal had put to the ſword 250,000 of their beſt troops in the ſpace of two years only, from the beginning of the ſecond Punick war incluſive. It is eaſy therefore to imagine how little able the Roman armies, conſiſting chiefly of new levies, would have been to face ſuch a commander as Hannibal, when ſupported by the promiſed reinforcement of 64,000 freſh men, beſides money and elephants in proportion. For Hannibal, though deprived of all ſupplies from Carthage by the malice of the Hannonian faction, maintained his ground above fourteen years more after his victory at Cannæ, in ſpite of the utmoſt efforts of the Romans. A truth which Livy himſelf ac-

[1] Appian. de Bell. Hannib. p. 328.

knowledges with admiration and aſtoniſhment at his ſuperior military capacity. From that period therefore after the battle of Cannæ, when Hannibal was firſt diſappointed of the promiſed ſupplies from Carthage, we ought properly to date the fall of that Republick, which muſt be wholly imputed to the inveterate malice of the profligate Hanno and his impious faction, who were determined, as Hannibal obſerved before, to ruin the contrary party, though by means which muſt be inevitably attended with the deſtruction of their country. [1] Appian inſinuates, that Hannibal firſt engaged in this war more from the importunity of his friends, than even his own paſſion for military glory and hereditary hatred to the Romans. For Hanno and his faction (as [2] Appian tells us) no longer dreading the power of Hamilcar and Aſdrubal his ſon-in-law, and holding Hannibal extremely cheap upon account of his youth, began to perſecute and oppreſs the Barcan party with ſo much rage and hatred, that the latter were obliged by letter to implore aſſiſtance from Hannibal, and to aſſure him that his own intereſt and ſafety was inſeparable from theirs. Hannibal (as Appian adds) was conſcious of the truth of

[1] Iberic. p. 259.

[2] Appian. id. ibid.

this

this remark, and well knew that the blows which ſeemed directed at his friends, were levelled in reality at his own head, and judged that a war with the Romans, which would be highly agreeable to the generality of his countrymen, might prove the ſureſt means of counter-working his enemies, and preſerving himſelf and his friends from the fury of a pliant and fickle populace, already inflamed againſt his party by the intrigues of Hanno. He concluded therefore, according to Appian, that a war with ſo formidable and dangerous a power, would divert the Carthaginians from all inquiries relative to his friends, and oblige them to attend wholly to an affair, which was of the laſt importance to their country. Should Appian's account of the cauſe of this war be admitted as true, it would be a yet ſtronger proof of the calamitous effects of party diſunion; though it would by no means excuſe Hannibal. For Hanno and his party would be equally culpable for driving a man of Hannibal's abilities to ſuch a deſperate meaſure, purely to ſcreen himſelf and his party from their malice and power. But the blame for not ſupporting Hannibal after the battle of Cannæ, when ſuch ſupport would have enabled him to cruſh that power, which by their means recovered ſtrength ſufficient to ſubvert their own

own country, muſt be thrown entirely upon Hanno and his party. It was a crime of the blackeſt dye, and an act of the higheſt treaſon againſt their country, and another terrible proof of the fatal effects of party diſunion. Nor was this evil peculiar to Carthage only, but was equally common in the Roman and Grecian Republicks. Nay, could we trace all our publick meaſures up to their firſt ſecret ſprings of action, I don't doubt (notwithſtanding the plauſible reaſons which might have been given to the publick to palliate ſuch meaſures) but we ſhould find our own country raſhly engaged in wars detrimental to her true intereſts, or obliged to ſubmit to a diſadvantageous peace, juſt as either was conducive to the private intereſt of the prevailing party. Will not our own annals furniſh us with ſome memorable inſtances of the truth of this aſſertion too recent to be denied? Was not the treatment which the great Duke of Marlborough received from Bolingbroke, the Engliſh Hanno, parallel to that which the victorious Hannibal met with from the Carthaginian, after the battle of Cannæ? Did not Bolingbroke, from the worſt of party motives, diſplace that ever victorious General, deſert our allies, and ſacrifice the brave and faithful Catalans, and the city of Barcelona, in at leaſt as ſhameful a manner

as the Romans did their unhappy friends at Saguntum? Did not the ſame miniſter by the fatal treaty of Utrecht, rob the nation of all thoſe advantages, which ſhe had reaſon to hope for from a long and ſucceſsful war? Did he not by the ſame treaty, give our mortal enemy France time to retrieve her affairs, and recover from that low ſtate to which the Duke of Marlborough had reduced her, and even to arrive at that power, at preſent ſo terrible to us and to all Europe?

To what can we attribute the late ill conducted war with Spain *, but to the ambition of party? How was the nation ſtunned with the noiſe of Spaniſh depredations from the preſs! how loudly did the ſame outcry reſound in parliament! yet when the leaders of that powerful oppoſition had carried their point by their popular clamours; when they had puſhed the nation into that war; when they had drove an overgrown miniſter from the helm, and neſtled themſelves in power, how quickly did they turn their backs upon the honeſt men of their party, who refuſed to concur in their meaſures! How ſoon did they convince the nation, by ſcreening that very miniſter who had been ſo many years the object of their reſentment, and by carrying on their own war (as I may

* The firſt Edition of this work appeared in 1759.

term

term it) with the ſame or greater lukewarmneſs than what they had ſo lately exclaimed againſt in the ſame miniſter; they convinced, I ſay, the whole nation, that the welfare of the publick, and the protection of our trade, had not the leaſt ſhare in the real motives of their conduct.

But as the Carthaginian hiſtory during this period, is intimately blended with the Roman, to avoid repetition, I am obliged to defer my farther remarks upon the conduct of this people, 'till I ſpeak of the difference between the civil and military polity, and manners of both thoſe nations.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of ROME.

THOUGH there is a concurrence of ſeveral cauſes which bring on the ruin of a ſtate, yet where luxury prevails, that parent of all our fantaſtick imaginary wants, ever craving and ever unſatisfied, we may juſtly aſſign it as the leading cauſe: ſince it ever was and ever will be the moſt baneful to publick virtue. For as luxury is contagious from its very nature, it will gradually deſcend from the higheſt to the loweſt ranks, 'till it has ultimately infected a whole people. The evils ariſing from luxury have not been peculiar to this or that nation, but equally fatal to all wherever it was admitted. Political [1] Philoſophy lays this down as a fnndamental and inconteſtable maxim, that all the moſt flouriſhing ſtates owed their ruin, ſooner or later, to the effects of luxury; and all hiſtory, from the origin of mankind, confirms this truth by the evidence of facts to the higheſt degree of demonſtration. In the great deſpotick monarchies it produced avarice, diſſipation, rapaciouſneſs, oppreſ-

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. cap. 2. p. 137. Edit. Wechel.

ſion,

ſion, perpetual factions amongſt the great, whilſt each endeavoured to engroſs the favour of the Prince wholly to himſelf; venality, and a contempt of all law and diſcipline both in the military and civil departments. Whilſt the people, following the pernicious example of their ſuperiors, contracted ſuch a daſtardly effeminacy, joined to an utter inability to ſupport the fatigues of war, as quickly threw them into the hands of the firſt reſolute invader. Thus the Aſſyrian empire ſunk under the arms of Cyrus with his poor but hardy Perſians. The extenſive and opulent empire of Perſia fell an eaſy conqueſt to Alexander and a handful of Macedonians; and the Macedonian Empire, when enervated by the luxury of Aſia, was compelled to receive the yoke of the victorious Romans.

Luxury, when introduced into free ſtates, and ſuffered to be diffuſed without controul through the body of the people, was ever productive of that degeneracy of manners, which extinguiſhed publick virtue, and put a final period to liberty. For as the inceſſant demands of luxury quickly induced neceſſity, that neceſſity kept human invention perpetually on the rack to find out ways and means to ſupply the demands of luxury. Hence the lower claſſes at firſt ſold their ſuffrages in privacy and with caution; but

as

as luxury increaſed, and the manners of the people grew daily more corrupt, they openly ſet them up to ſale to the beſt bidder. Hence too the ambitious amongſt the higher centuries, whoſe ſuperior wealth was frequently their own qualification, firſt purchaſed the moſt lucrative poſts in the State by this infamous kind of traffick, and then maintained themſelves in power by that additional fund for corruption, which their employments ſupplied, 'till they had undone thoſe they had firſt corrupted.

But of all the ancient Republicks, Rome in the laſt period of her freedom was the ſcene where all the inordinate paſſions of mankind operated moſt powerfully and with the greateſt latitude. There we ſee luxury, ambition, faction, pride, revenge, ſelfiſhneſs, a total diſregard to the publick good, and an univerſal diſſoluteneſs of manners, firſt make them ripe for, and then compleat their deſtruction. Conſequently that period, by ſhewing us more ſtriking examples, will afford us more uſeful leſſons than any other part of their hiſtory.

Rome, once the mighty miſtreſs of the univerſe, owed her riſe, according to Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, the moſt curious and moſt exact inquirer into the Roman antiquities, to a ſmall colony of the Albans under the conduct of Romulus, the ſuppoſed grandſon

ſon of Numitor King of Alba. That the Albans derived their origin from the Greeks ſeems highly probable from the nature of the Alban and Roman monarchical government, which appears to be plainly copied from Lycurgus.

The government firſt inſtituted by Romulus, the founder of this extraordinary Empire, was that perfect ſort, as it is termed by Dionyſius and Polybius, which conſiſted of a due admixture of the regal, ariſtocratick, and democratick powers. As this great man received the Crown as a reward for his ſuperior merit, and held it by the beſt of all titles, the willing and unanimous choice of a free people; and as he is univerſally allowed to be the ſole inſtitutor of their firſt form of government, I cannot help ranking him amongſt the moſt celebrated law-givers and heroes of antiquity. Romulus's plan of government, though formed upon the model of Lycurgus, was evidently, in ſome reſpects, ſuperior to the Spartan. For the executive power in the Roman Government was lodged in one man only; the number of the Senators was much greater; and though the whole body of the Romans was formed into one regular militia, yet the loweſt claſs of the people were directed to apply themſelves to agriculture, grazing, and other lucrative employments; a practice wholly

wholly prohibited to the free Spartans. The great employments of the State were ſolely confined to the Patricians, or Ariſtocratick part; but the Plebeians, or commonalty, had in return the power of chuſing Magiſtrates, enacting laws, and determining about all wars when propoſed by the King. But ſtill their decrees were not final, for the concurrence of the Senate was abſolutely neceſſary to give a ſanction to whatever the people had determined.

Whether the Romans would have continued the regal power in their founder's family by hereditary ſucceſſion, cannot poſſibly be determined, becauſe, when Romulus was put to death by the Patricians for aiming at more power than was conſiſtent with their limited monarchy, he left no children. This however is certain, that their monarchy continued to be elective, and was attended with thoſe diſorders which are the uſual effects of that capital error in politicks, 'till the uſurpation of Tarquinius Superbus.

After the death of Romulus, Numa, a man of a very different genius, was invited to the throne by the unanimous conſent of the whole body of the Romans. This worthy prince reclaimed his ſubjects from their ſavage fondneſs for war and plunder, and taught them the arts of peace, and the happineſs of civil and ſocial life, by inſtructing

them in the great duties of religion, or piety towards their Gods, and the laws of juſtice and humanity, which contained their duty towards their fellow-creatures. The long reign of this wiſe and good prince was the moſt remarkable and the moſt happy period of time Rome ever knew from her foundation to her diſſolution. For during the whole term of forty-three years, which was the extent of his reign, the harmony of the Roman State was neither interrupted by any civil diſſention at home, nor the happineſs of the people diſturbed by any foreign war or invaſion. After the death of Numa, who died univerſally lamented as the father of the people, Tullus Hoſtilius, a man of real merit, was legally elected King; but, after a victorious reign of thirty-two years, was deſtroyed with his whole family by lightning, according to ſome authors, but, according to others, was murdered by Ancus Marcius, grandſon to Numa, by his only daughter, who looked upon his own right to the crown as prior to Tullus, or his family. Ancus Marcius, however, received the crown by a free election of the people, and died a natural death after a reign of twenty-four years, in which he reſtored ſuch of the religious inſtitutions of his grandfather Numa as had been neglected during the reign of his predeceſſor. He greatly enlarged the city of Rome itſelf,

and

and made it a ſea-port by fortifying the haven at the mouth of the river Tiber.

Lucius Tarquinius, a man of Greek extraction by his father's ſide, and admitted to the privilege of a Roman citizen under the reign of Ancus Marcius, was raiſed to the throne for his uncommon merit, and ſhewed himſelf worthy of that high truſt, which was repoſed in him by the Romans. He encreaſed the number of the Senators to three hundred, greatly enlarged their territories, and beautified the city; and, after an illuſtrious reign of thirty-eight years, was aſſaſſinated in his palace by the contrivance of the two ſons of Ancus Marcius, who hoped after his death to recover the kingdom, which their father had been poſſeſſed of. But their ſcheme was far from ſucceeding, for Tarquinius was ſo well beloved by his people, that the perſons, who committed the murder, were executed, and the ſons of Ancus baniſhed, and their eſtates confiſcated. Tullius Servius, who had married the daughter of Tarquinius, ſucceeded to the crown by the artful management of his mother-in-law, and by the favour of the people, though without the concurrence either of the Senate or Patricians. Tullius was certainly a man of real merit, and, as I think, ſuperior in point of abilities to all the Roman Kings, Romulus alone excepted. But as he ſeemed to affect a Democracy, and was chiefly ſupported by the

people, he was always diſagreeable to the Patricians, who looked upon his advancement to the crown as an illegal intruſion. But as he did moſt ſignal ſervices to his country, during a glorious reign of four and forty years, I cannot help taking notice of ſome of his inſtitutions, without the knowledge of which it is hardly poſſible to form a perfect idea of the Roman conſtitution.

Tullius ordered all the Romans to regiſter their names and ages, with thoſe of their parents, wives and children, and the place of their abode, either in the city or the country. At the ſame time he enjoined them to give in upon oath a juſt valuation of their effects, on pain of being whipped and ſold for ſlaves, if they failed in regiſtering all theſe particulars. From this regiſter he formed his plan for a regular and general militia, which was invariably followed by the Romans, 'till the time of Marius. To effect this he divided the whole body of the citizens into ſix claſſes. The firſt claſs conſiſted of thoſe whoſe poſſeſſions amounted to a hundred [1] *Minæ*. Theſe he armed in the compleateſt manner, and divided into eighty centuries; forty of which, compoſed of the younger men, were appointed to take the field in time of war; the other forty were aſſigned for the defence

[1] About three hundred pounds.

of

of the city. To theſe eighty centuries of heavy armed foot he added eighteen centuries of horſe, ſelected out of thoſe who had the largeſt eſtates, and were of diſtinguiſhed birth. Thus the firſt claſs contained ninety-eight centuries. The ſecond, third, and fourth claſſes conſiſted each of twenty centuries only, and were compoſed of citizens, whoſe effects were eſtimated at ſeventy-five, fifty, and five and twenty *Minæ*; and their arms were lighter according to their reſpective claſſes. To the ſecond claſs he added two claſſes of armourers and axmen; to the fourth claſs two centuries of trumpeters and blowers on the horn, which contained the martial muſick of the army. The fifth claſs conſiſted of thoſe who were worth twelve *Minæ* and a half, which he divided into thirty centuries, armed with darts and ſlings only, and were properly irregulars. The ſixth claſs, which was by much the moſt numerous, was comprehended in one century only, and conſiſted of the pooreſt citizens, who were exempted from all kinds of taxes, as well as all ſervice in the army.

By this wiſe diſpoſition the burden of the war fell chiefly upon thoſe who were beſt able to ſupport it. Thus, for inſtance, if he wanted to raiſe twenty thouſand men, he divided that number amongſt the centuries of

the firſt five claſſes, and ordered each century to furniſh its reſpective quota. He then calculated the ſum neceſſary for the ſupport of the war, which he divided in the ſame manner amongſt the centuries, and ordered every man to pay in proportion to his poſſeſſions. Hence the rich, who were fewer in number, but divided into more centuries, were not only obliged to ſerve oftener, but to pay greater taxes. For Tullius thought it juſt, that they who had the greateſt property at ſtake ſhould bear the greateſt ſhare of the burden, both in their perſons and fortunes: as he judged it equitable, that the poor ſhould be exempted from taxes, becauſe they were in want of the neceſſaries of life; and from the ſervice, becauſe the Roman ſoldiers ſerved at that time at their own expence; a cuſtom which continued long after. For the Roman ſoldiers received no pay, as [1] Livy informs us, 'till the three hundred and forty-eighth year from the foundation of the city. —As the rich, by this regulation, were ſubjected to the greateſt ſhare of the expence and danger, Tullius made them an ample recompence by throwing the chief power of the Government into their hands, which he effected by the following ſcheme, too artful for the penetration of the common people.

[1] Liv. lib. 4. p. 276.

By

By the fundamental conſtitution of the Romans, the electing Magiſtrates, both civil and military, the enacting or repealing laws, and the declaring war, or concluding peace, were all determined by the ſuffrages of the people. But as the people voted by their curiæ [1], into ten of which every tribe was divided,

[1] Romulus had divided the whole People into thirty curiæ, ten of which compoſed a Tribe. At their comitia, or general aſſemblies, the people divided into their reſpective curiæ, and gave their votes man by man. The majority of votes in each curia paſſed for the voice of the whole curia, and the majority of the curiæ for the general determination of the whole people.

Tullius on the contrary took their votes only by centuries, the whole number of which amounted to 193, into which he had ſubdivided the ſix claſſes. But as the firſt claſs alone, which was compoſed wholly of the rich, contained 98 of theſe centuries, if the centuries of the firſt claſs were unanimous, which, as Dionyſius informs us, was generally the caſe, they carried every point by a ſure majority of 3.——If they diſagreed, Tullius called the centuries of the 2d claſs, and ſo on 'till 97 centuries agreed in one opinion, which made a majority of one. If the numbers continued equal, that is, 96 on each ſide of the queſtion, after the five firſt claſſes had voted; Tullius called up the ſixth claſs, which was compoſed wholly of the pooreſt people, and contained but one century, and the vote of this century determined the queſtion.——But this caſe, as Dionyſius obſerves, happened ſo very rarely, that even the votes of the 4th claſs were ſeldom called for, and thus the votes of the fifth and ſixth were generally uſeleſs. Conſequently, when the people voted by their curiæ, where the vote of every individual was taken, the poor, who were much the more numerous, might always be

vided, the meaneſt citizen had an equal vote with the greateſt: conſequently, as the poor were much more numerous than the rich, they carried every point by a ſure majority. Tullius altered this method, aſſembled the people, and took their votes by centuries, not by curiæ. This artful meaſure turned the ſcale, and transferred the majority to the rich. For as the votes of the firſt claſs were firſt taken, the votes of that claſs, which contained ninety-eight centuries, if unanimous, always conſtituted a majority of three votes, which decided the queſtion without taking the votes of the five ſucceeding claſſes, as they were in that caſe wholly uſeleſs.

Tullius had married his two daughters to Tarquinius and Aruns, the grandſons of his predeceſſor, whoſe guardianſhip he had undertaken during their minority. But what tye is ſtrong enough to reſtrain ambition! His younger daughter Tullia, the moſt ambitious and moſt deteſtable of her ſex, unable to prevail upon her huſband Aruns to join in depoſing her father, applied to her brother-in-law Tarquinius, whoſe temper

ſecure of a great majority.——But when the votes were taken by centuries, according to the new method inſtituted by Tullius, that numerous body of the poor, which compoſed the ſingle century of the ſixth claſs, and conſequently had but one vote, became wholly inſignicant.

was

was congenial with her own, and offered to be his wife if he would aſſert his juſt right, as ſhe termed it, and attempt to ſupplant her father. The offer was accepted, and the inceſtuous match agreed upon, which was ſoon after compleated by the death of her huſband and ſiſter, who were privately diſpatched, that there might be no obſtacle remaining. Tarquinius, now the worthy huſband of ſuch a wife, attempted in the ſenate to procure the depoſition of Tullius; but, failing in his deſign, at the inſtigation of his impious wife, he procured the old King to be openly aſſaſſinated in the ſtreet before his palace, and the unnatural Tullia drove her chariot in triumph over the body of her murdered father. By this complicated ſcene of adultery, murder, and parricide, Tarquin, ſurnamed the Proud, forced his way to the throne, and to uſurpation added the moſt execrable and avowed tyranny. The Patricians, who had favoured his uſurpation, either from their hatred to Tullius and the Plebeians, or from the hopes of ſharing in the Government, with which, according to Dionyſius, they had been privately allured, were the firſt who felt the bloody effects of his arbitrary temper. Not only the friends of Tullius,

[a] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 4. p. 182. edit. 1546.

and

and thoſe whom he ſuſpected as uneaſy under his uſurpation, but all who were diſtinguiſhed by their ſuperior wealth, fell a ſacrifice to his ſuſpicion or avarice. All ſuch were accuſed by his profligate emiſſaries, of many fictitious crimes, but particularly of a conſpiracy againſt his perſon; the common pretence of all tyrants. As the tyrant himſelf ſat as judge, all defence was uſeleſs. Some received ſentence of death, ſome of baniſhment, and the eſtates of both were alike confiſcated. The greater number of thoſe that were accuſed, knowing the true motives of the tyrant's conduct, and deſpairing of ſafety, voluntarily left the city; but ſome of the greateſt note were privately murdered by his orders, whoſe bodies could never be found. When he had ſufficiently thinned the Senate by the death or baniſhment of its moſt valuable members, he filled up the vacant ſeats with his own creatures. But as he allowed nothing to be propoſed or done there, but in conformity to his orders, he reduced it to an empty form, without the leaſt ſhadow of power. [1] The Plebeians, who beheld with pleaſure the ſufferings of the Patricians, which they eſteemed a juſt puniſhment for their behaviour under the reign of Tullius, were quickly treated with much greater ſeverity. For the Tyrant

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. id. ibid.

not

not only abolished all the laws which Tullius had established to secure them against the oppressions of the Patricians, but loaded them with ruinous taxes, and prohibited all their publick religious assemblies, that they might have no opportunity of meeting to form secret conspiracies. Proceeding then upon the constant maxim of all tyrants, that idleness in the people is the parent of all sedition, he exhausted them so much by the slavish drudgery in which he kept them constantly employed at the publick works, that the Patricians rejoiced in their turn at the heavier miseries of the Plebeians, whilst neither of them endeavoured to put a period to their common calamities. After the Romans had groaned five and twenty years under this cruel and ignominious bondage, the rape committed by Sextus, the eldest son of Tarquin, upon Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus, an eminent Patrician, and near relation of the Tarquin family, produced a coalition of both orders, which ended in the expulsion of Tarquin and his sons, and a solemn abjuration of monarchical Government.

The tyranny of Tarquin had made the very name of King so odious to the Romans in general, that the Patricians, who were the chief conductors of this revolution, found it no difficult matter to establish an Aris-

Ariſtocracy upon the ruins of Monarchy.[1] Two Magiſtrates were appointed, termed Conſuls, veſted with the regal power, whoſe office was annual and elective. The Senate was filled up out of the moſt eminent of the Plebeians, after they had firſt been created Patricians, and the people reſtored to their right of holding aſſemblies, of giving their votes, and doing whatever they were intitled to by former cuſtoms. But the power of the people was rather nominal than real. For though the Conſuls were annually elected by the ſuffrages of the people, a privilege which carried the appearance of a Democracy, yet as the votes were taken by centuries, not by tribes, the Patricians were generally maſters of the election. It is remarkable that, after the expulſion of Tarquin, Dionyſius conſtantly terms the new Government an Ariſtocracy. It evidently appears too through the whole remaining part of his hiſtory, that there was a ſelfiſh and haughty faction amongſt the Patricians, who affected a tyrannical Oligarchy, and aimed at reducing the Plebeians to a ſtate of ſervitude. Valerius, ſurnamed Poplicola, the moſt humane patriot of all thoſe who were concerned in baniſhing the Tarquins, introduced ſome beneficent laws, which, according to Dionyſi-

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 5. p. 205.

us,

us, gave great relief to the Plebeians. For by one he made it capital for any perſon to exerciſe any magiſtracy over the Romans, unleſs that office ſhould be received from the people: as he ordered by another, that no Roman ſhould be puniſhed without a legal trial; and that if any Roman ſhould be condemned by any magiſtrate to be fined, whipped, or put to death, the condemned perſon might appeal from the ſentence of that Magiſtrate to the people, and ſhould be liable to no puniſhment 'till his fate had been determined by their ſuffrages. A plain proof that the Plebeians 'till that time laboured under grievances not very conſiſtent with their pretended liberty. Another proof may be drawn from the wretched ſtate of the Plebeians, under the cruel oppreſſions ariſing from the avarice and extortions of the Patricians, which firſt gave birth to thoſe perpetual ſeditions, which fill the hiſtory of that Republick. For as the Roman ſoldiers, who were all free citizens, not only paid their proportion of the taxes, but were obliged to ſerve in the field at their own expence during the whole campaign, this frequently obliged them to borrow money at high intereſt of the Patricians, who had engroſſed by far the greater part of publick wealth. But as the Roman territories were often ravaged by their neighbours in thoſe wars, which Tarquin per-

perpetually incited to procure the recovery of his crown, the loſs fell heavieſt upon the Plebeians, who were frequently ſtript of all their effects, and reduced to the utmoſt poverty. Hence unable to pay the principal of their debts, joined to an accumulated load of uſury upon uſury, they were ſurrendered by the judges to the diſcretion of their creditors. Theſe unfeeling wretches confined their debtors in chains, tortured their bodies with whips, and treated them with ſuch inhumanity, that great numbers of the Romans were in as bad a ſituation as the poor Athenians when Solon firſt undertook the adminiſtration. The effects of this deteſtable treatment of people, who had been taught to call themſelves free, appeared about twelve years after the erection of their new Government. For when the Tarquins had raiſed up a confederacy of thirty cities of the Latines againſt them, the Plebeians peremptorily refuſed to enliſt 'till a vote was paſſed for the abolition of their debts. As perſuaſions had no effect, the Senate met upon the occaſion. Valerius, the ſon of the humane Poplicola, pleaded ſtrongly in favour of the people, but was violently oppoſed by Appius Claudius, a haughty and imperious man, who is termed by Dionyſius an abettor of the Oligarchy, and head of that faction, which were enemies to the people. The moderate men amongſt the Senators

propoſed that the debts ſhould be paid out of the publick treaſury; a meaſure which would preſerve the poor for the ſervice of the State, and prevent any injuſtice to the creditors. Salutary as this meaſure muſt ſeem, the oppoſition was ſo great that nothing was agreed to, and the reſult of the debates was, "That no decree ſhould be made at preſent relating to this affair, but that as ſoon as the war ſhould be concluded with ſucceſs, the Conſuls ſhould lay it before the Senate, and take their vote upon the occaſion. That in the mean time no debt ſhould be ſued for, and that the execution of all laws, except thoſe relating to the war, ſhould be ſuſpended." This decree did not wholly quiet the ferment amongſt the people. Several of the poorer ſort demanded an immediate abolition of their debts, as the condition for their taking a ſhare in the dangers of the war, and looked upon this delay rather as an impoſition. The Senate, who, as the event ſhewed, were determined never to grant their requeſt, and yet were afraid of new commotions, reſolved to aboliſh the Conſulſhip, and all other Magiſtracies for the preſent, and to inveſt a new Magiſtrate with abſolute and unlimited power, and ſubject to no account for his actions. This new officer was termed the Dictator, and the duration of his office was limited to ſix months, at the end of which term

term the Conſuls were to reſume their former authority. The chief reaſon, as [1] Dionyſius informs us, which induced the Senate to make uſe of this dangerous expedient, was to evade that law which Poplicola had procured in favour of the Plebeians, which made it death for a Magiſtrate to puniſh a Roman without a legal trial, or before he was condemned by the people. The Senate then made a decree for the election of a Dictator; and the Plebeians ignorant, as Dionyſius obſerves, of the importance of that decree, not only confirmed the reſolutions of the Senate, but gave up to them the power of chuſing the perſon who ſhould be inveſted with that dignity. Titus Lartius, one of the Conſuls, was nominated by his colleague, according to the form at that time agreed upon in the Senate. When the Dictator appeared in all the pomp and grandeur of his new office, he ſtruck a terror into the moſt turbulent; and the people, thus tricked out of that law which was their only protection, immediately ſubmitted. Lartius, who ſeems to have been one of the greateſt men of his time, ordered in a general regiſter of all the Romans, and formed his army after that wiſe method firſt inſtituted by Servius Tullius. When he took the field he perſuaded the Latines, by his ſingular addreſs, to diſband their forces and conclude a truce, and thus divert-

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 5. p. 247.

ed

ed the impending ſtorm without fighting. He then returned home, and reſigned his office before the time was expired, without having exerciſed any one act of ſeverity upon a ſingle Roman. A noble inſtance of moderation and publick virtue!

At the expiration of the truce, which was made for one year only, the Latines took the field with a powerful army. Aulus Poſthumius was created Dictator by the Romans, and a deciſive battle was fought near the Lake Regillus, in which the Romans were compleatly victors. Sextus Tarquin was killed upon the ſpot, and old Tarquin the father died ſoon after. As ſoon as this war was ended, the Senate, regardleſs of their promiſe, ordered all thoſe ſuits for debt to be determined according to law, which had been ſuſpended during the war. This faithleſs proceeding raiſed ſuch violent commotions amongſt the people, that a foreign war was judged the beſt expedient to divert the ſtorm which threatened the Ariſtocracy. The haughty Appius Claudius, and Publius Servilius, a man of a very different character, were nominated Conſuls by Poſthumius and his [1] colleague, which ſeems a manifeſt invaſion of the rights of the people. A war was reſolved upon againſt the Volſcians, but the

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 6. p. 255.

Plebeians again refuſed to obey the ſummons for inliſting. Servilius adhered to the maxims of Valerius, and adviſed an immediate decree for the abolition of the debts. But he was furiouſly oppoſed by [1] the inexorable Appius, who called him a flatterer of the people, and declared that it would be giving up the Government to the people, when they had it in their power to live under an Ariſtocracy. After much time was ſpent in theſe debates, Servilius, who was a popular man, prevailed upon the Plebeians by his intreaties, and raiſed an army of volunteers, with which he marched againſt the enemy. The Volſcians, who placed their chief dependance upon the diſunion which prevailed amongſt the Romans, ſubmitted to whatever terms the Conſul ſhould think proper to impoſe, and delivered three hundred hoſtages choſen out of their principal families, as a ſecurity for their behaviour. But this ſubmiſſion was far from real, and calculated only to amuſe the Romans, and gain time for their military preparations. War was once more decreed againſt the Volſcians; but whilſt the Senate was deliberating about the number of the forces proper to be employed, a man advanced in years appeared in the Forum, and

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 6. p. 266.

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implored the aſſiſtance of the people. [1] Famine ſat pictured in his pale and meagre face, and the ſqualid hue of his dreſs indicated the extremes of poverty and wretchedneſs. This man, who was not unknown to the people, and, according to report, had borne a command in the army, firſt ſhewed ſeveral honourable ſcars in his breaſt, remains of the wounds he had received in the ſervice of his country, and then informed them: "That "he had been preſent in eight and twenty "battles, and frequently received rewards "beſtowed only upon ſuperior bravery: "that in the Sabine war his cattle were "driven off by the enemy, his eſtate plun-"dered, and his houſe reduced to aſhes: "that under theſe unhappy circumſtances "he was compelled to borrow money to pay "the publick taxes; that this debt, accu-"mulated by uſury, reduced him to the ſad "neceſſity of ſelling the eſtate deſcended "to him from his anceſtors, with what "little effects he had remaining: but that "all this proving inſufficient, his devouring "debts, like a waſting conſumption, had at-"tacked his perſon, and he, with his two

[1] I have chiefly followed Livy in his beautiful relation of this affair, as the deſcription he gives of this unhappy object, is not only much more ſtriking than that of Dionyſius, but one of the moſt pathetick I ever met with in hiſtory. Liv. lib. 2. p. 92.

" ſons, were delivered up as ſlaves, and led " away to the ſlaughter-houſe by his credi- " tors." When he had ſaid this, he threw off his rags, and ſhewed his back yet bleeding from the ſcourge of his mercileſs maſter. This ſight inflamed the people greatly; but the debtors breaking out of their creditors houſes, moſt of whom were loaded with chains and fetters, raiſed their fury even to madneſs. If any one deſired them to take up arms in defence of their country, the debtors ſhewed [1] their chains, as the reward they had met with for their paſt ſervices, and aſked with indignation, whether ſuch bleſſings were worth fighting for? whilſt numbers of them openly declared, that it was much more eligible to be ſlaves to the Volſcians than the Patricians. The Senate, quite diſconcerted by the violence of the tumult, intreated Servilius to take the management of the people. For an expreſs was juſt arrived from the Latines, with advice that a numerous army of the enemy had already entered their territories. Servilius remonſtrated to the people the conſequences of diſunion at ſo critical a juncture, and pacified them by the aſſurance that the Senate would confirm whatever conceſſions he ſhould make; he then ordered the crier to

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 6. p. 268.

pro-

proclaim, that no citizen who voluntarily inliſted ſhould be ſubject to the demands or inſults of his creditors whilſt the army continued in the field. The people now flocked in with chearfulneſs, and the levies were ſoon compleated. Servilius took the field and defeated the Volſcians, made himſelf maſter of their camp, took ſeveral of their cities, and divided the whole plunder amongſt his ſoldiers. At the news of this ſucceſs the ſanguinary [1] Appius ordered all the Volſcian hoſtages to be brought into the Forum, there to be whipped and publickly beheaded. And when at his return Servilius demanded a triumph, he loudly oppoſed it, called him a factious man, and accuſed him of defrauding the treaſury of the booty, and prevailed upon the Senate to deny him that honour. Servilius, enraged at this uſage, entered the city in triumph with his army, amidſt the acclamations of the people, to the great mortification of the Patricians.

Under the following conſulſhip the Sabines prepared to invade the Romans, and the people again refuſed to ſerve unleſs the debts were firſt aboliſhed. Lartius, the firſt dictator, pleaded ſtrongly for the people; but the inflexible Appius propoſed the nomination of a Dictator, as the only remedy againſt the

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 6. p. 270.

mutiny. His motion was carried in the Senate by a majority of voices, and Manius Valerius, a brother to the great Poplicola, was created Dictator. Valerius, who was a man of great honour, engaged his word to the Plebeians, that if they would ſerve chearfully upon this occaſion, he would undertake the Senate ſhould reward them by quieting the conteſts relating to their debts, and granting whatever they could reaſonably deſire; and commanded at the ſame time that no citizen ſhould be ſued for debt during his adminiſtration. The people had ſo often experienced the publick virtue of the Valerian family, and no longer apprehenſive of being again impoſed upon, offered themſelves in ſuch crowds, that ten legions of four thouſand men each were levied, the greateſt army of natives the Romans had ever brought into the field. The Dictator finiſhed the campaign with glory, was rewarded with a triumph, and diſcharged the people from farther ſervice. [1] This ſtep was not at all agreeable to the Senate, who feared the people would now claim the performance of the Dictator's promiſes. Their fears were juſt; for Valerius kept his word with the people, and moved the Senate that the promiſe they had made to him might be taken into con-

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 6. p. 276—77.

ſideration.

ſideration. But the Appian faction oppoſed it with the utmoſt virulence, and exclaimed againſt his family as flatterers of the people, and introducers of pernicious laws. Valerius, finding his motion over-ruled, reproached the Senate for their behaviour, and foretold the conſequences which would attend it; and quitting the Senate abruptly, called an aſſembly of the people. After he had thanked them for their fidelity and bravery, he informed them of the uſage he had met with in the Senate, and declared how greatly both he and they had been impoſed upon; and reſigning his office, ſubmitted himſelf to whatever treatment the people ſhould think proper. The people heard him with equal veneration and compaſſion, and attended him home from the Forum with repeated acclamations. The Plebeians now kept no meaſures with the Senate, but aſſembled openly, and conſulted about ſeceding from the Patricians. To prevent this ſtep, the Senate ordered the Conſuls not to diſmiſs their armies, but to lead them out into the field, under pretence that the Sabines were again preparing for an invaſion. The Conſuls left the city, and incamped nearly together; but the ſoldiers, inſtigated by one Sicinnius Bellutus, ſeized the arms and enſigns to avoid violating their military oath, ſeceded from the Conſuls, and after they had appointed

Sicinnius commander in chief, incamped on a certain eminence near the river Anio, which from that event was always termed the *Mons Sacer*, or the Holy Mountain.

When the news of the ſeceſſion was brought to Rome, the confuſion was ſo great, that the city had the appearance of a place taken by ſtorm, and the Appian faction were ſeverely reproached as the cauſe of this deſertion. Their enemies at the ſame time making inroads up to the very gates of Rome, increaſed the general conſternation, as the Patricians were terribly afraid they would be joined by the ſeceders. But the ſoldiers behaved with ſo much decency and moderation, that the Senate after long debates ſent deputies to invite them to return, with the promiſe of a general amneſty. The offer was received with ſcorn, and the Patricians were charged with diſſimulation, in pretending ignorance of the juſt demands of the Plebeians, and the true cauſe of their ſeceſſion. At the return of the deputies, the affair was again debated in the Senate. Agrippa Menenius, a man reſpectable for his ſuperior wiſdom and thorough knowledge of the true principles of government, and who was alike an enemy to tyranny in the ariſtocracy, and licentiouſneſs in the people, adviſed healing meaſures, and propoſed to ſend ſuch perſons as the people could confide in

with full power to put an end to the ſedition in the manner they ſhould judge moſt proper, without farther application to the Senate. Manius Valerius, the laſt Dictator, ſpoke next, and reminded the Senate, " That " his predictions of the evils which would " reſult from their breach of promiſe were " now verified: that he adviſed a ſpeedy ac- " commodation with the people, leſt the " ſame evils, if ſuffered to make a farther " progreſs, ſhould become incurable: that " in his opinion the demands of the people " would riſe higher than the bare abolition " of debts, and that they would inſiſt upon " ſuch ſecurity as might be the firm guar- " dian of their rights and liberty for the " future; becauſe the late inſtitution of " the Dictatorſhip had ſuperſeded the Va- " lerian law, which was before the only " guardian of their liberty; and the late " denial of a triumph to the Conſul Servi- " lius, who had deſerved that honour more " than any man in Rome, evidently proved, " that the people were deprived of almoſt " all thoſe privileges they had formerly en- " joyed, ſince a Conſul and a Dictator who " ſhewed the leaſt concern for the intereſts " of the people, were treated with abuſe " and ignominy by the Senate: that he did " not impute theſe arbitrary meaſures to the " moſt conſiderable and reſpectable perſons

" amongſt

" amongſt the Patricians, but to a combi-
" nation of proud and avaritious men, wholly
" intent upon unwarrantable gain; who by
" advancing large ſums at exceſſive intereſt,
" had enſlaved many of their fellow-citizens,
" and by their cruel and inſulting treatment
" of their unhappy debtors, had alienated
" the whole body of the Plebeians from the
" Ariſtocracy: that theſe men, by forming
" themſelves into a faction, and placing
" Appius, a known enemy to the people
" and abettor of the Oligarchy at their
" head, had under his patronage, reduced
" the commonwealth to its preſent deſpe-
" rate ſituation." He concluded by ſecond-
ing the motion of Menenius for ſending am-
baſſadors to put a ſpeedy end to the ſedition
upon the beſt terms they ſhould be able to
obtain.

Appius, finding himſelf thus perſonally attacked, roſe up and replied to Valerius in a hot inflammatory ſpeech full of the moſt virulent invectives. He denied that he was ever guilty of inſlaving his debtors: " He
" denied too, that thoſe who had acted in
" that manner could be charged with injuſ-
" tice, ſince they had done no more than
" the laws allowed. He affirmed that the
" imputation of being an enemy to the peo-
" ple, and favouring Oligarchy, aroſe from
" his ſteady adherence to the Ariſtocracy,

" and

" and equally affected all thoſe of ſuperior
" worth, who like him diſdained to be go-
" verned by their inferiors, or to ſuffer the
" [1] form of government which they had in-
" herited from their anceſtors to deviate into
" the worſt of all conſtitutions, a Demo-
" cracy. He recriminated upon Valerius,
" and charged him with aiming at Tyranny,
" by courting the moſt profligate of the ci-
" tizens, as the moſt effectual and ſhorteſt
" way of inſlaving his country. He termed
" the ſeceders, vile, mean wretches, a
" thoughtleſs ſenſeleſs multitude, whoſe pre-
" ſent arrogance had been firſt inſpired by
" that old man, as he contemptuouſly called
" Valerius. He declared abſolutely againſt
" ſending ambaſſadors, or making the leaſt
" conceſſion, and adviſed rather to arm the
" ſlaves, and ſend for aſſiſtance from their
" allies the Latines, than ſubmit to any
" thing that might derogate from the power
" and dignity of the Patricians. He pro-
" poſed, if the ſeceders ſhould appear in arms
" againſt them, to put their wives and
" children to death before their faces by
" the moſt ſevere and ignominious tor-
" tures. But if they would ſubmit at diſ-

[1] It is remarkable that Appius terms the Ariſtocracy, which, at that very time, was hardly of ſeventeen years ſtanding, the form of government which they had inherited from their anceſtors.

" cretion

" cretion to the Senate, he adviſed to treat " them with moderation." This ſpeech produced a violent tumult in the Senate; and the young Patricians who adhered to Appius behaved with ſo much inſolence, that the Conſuls threatened to exclude them from the publick councils, by a law which ſhould fix the age for the qualification of every Senator. Nothing was determined at that time, but in a few days, the moderate party, ſupported by the firmneſs of the Conſuls, prevailed againſt the ſtill inflexible Appius; and ten ambaſſadors, at the head of whom were Menenius and Valerius, were ſent with full powers to treat with the ſeceders. After many debates, Menenius in the name of the Senate promiſed full redreſs of all their grievances with reſpect to the debts, and offered to confirm this promiſe by the ſolemn oaths of all the ambaſſadors. His offer was upon the point of being accepted, when Lucius Junius, who affected the ſurname of Brutus, a bold and able Plebeian, interpoſed and inſiſted upon ſuch a ſecurity from the Senate as might protect the Plebeians for the future from the power of their enemies, who might find an opportunity of wreaking their vengeance on the people for the ſtep they had taken. When Menenius deſired to know what ſecurity he required, Junius demanded leave for the people to chuſe annually

nually a certain number of magiſtrates out of their own body, veſted with the power of defending their rights and liberties, and protecting their perſons from injury and violence. As this new and unexpected demand ſeemed of too great conſequence to be granted by the ambaſſadors. Valerius with ſome others were ſent to take the opinion of the Senate upon that ſubject. Valerius laid this demand before the Senate, and gave his opinion that the favour ſhould be granted, and Appius, as uſual, oppoſed it with outrageous fury. But the majority, determined at all events to put a period to the ſeceſſion, ratified all the promiſes made by the ambaſſadors, and granted the deſired ſecurity. The ſeceders held their aſſembly in the camp, and taking the votes by curiæ, elected five perſons for their annual magiſtrates, who were termed Tribunes of the people. By a law made immediately after the election, the perſons of the Tribunes were rendered ſacred; and the people obliged themſelves to ſwear by whatever was held moſt ſacred, that they and their poſterity would preſerve it inviolably.

The erection of the tribunitial-power, which happened about ſeventeen years after the expulſion of the Kings, is certainly the æra from which the liberty of the Roman people ought properly to be dated. All the neigh-

neighbouring States were at that time ſubject to Ariſtocracy, where the people had little or no ſhare in the government; and it appears evidently from the Roman hiſtorians, that the Romans intended to eſtabliſh the ſame form of government at Rome after the abolition of monarchy. For the Senate, as Livy [1] informs us, gave a looſe to that unbounded joy which the death of Tarquin inſpired, and begun to oppreſs and injure the people, whom 'till that time they had courted with the utmoſt aſſiduity. But Salluſt is more full and explicit. For he [2] affirms, "That after the expulſion of the Kings, as long as the fear of Tarquin and the burthenſome war with the Etrurians kept the Romans in ſuſpence, the government was adminiſtered with equity and moderation. But as ſoon as ever the dread of thoſe impending dangers was removed, the Senate begun to domineer over the people, and treat them as ſlaves; inflicting death or ſcourging after the arbitrary manner of deſpotick Tyrants; expelling them from their lands, and arrogating the whole power of government to themſelves, without communicating the leaſt ſhare of it to the Plebeians." Thus the people, before the creation of this magiſ-

[1] Liv. lib. 2. p. 91.

[2] Salluſt. Fragment. apud Auguſtin. de civitate Dei, lib. 2. cap. 18. edit. Froben. 1569.

tracy,

tracy, were amuſed with the name of Liberty, whilſt in fact they had only changed the Tyranny of one, for the more galling yoke of three hundred. But the tribunitial-power proved an invincible obſtacle to the arbitrary ſchemes of the Ariſtocratick faction, and at laſt introduced that due admixture of Democracy, which is ſo eſſentialty neceſſary to the conſtitution of a well regulated Republick.

As a minute detail of a hiſtory ſo well known as that of the Romans would be quite ſuperfluous, I ſhall only obſerve, That the Democratick power in that Republick did not arrive at its juſt ſtate of independance, 'till the Plebeians were not only entitled to the higheſt poſts and dignities, equally with the Patricians, but 'till the Plebiſcita or decrees made by the people in their aſſembly by tribes, [1] were confirmed to be

[1] In the Comitia Tributa, or aſſemblies by tribes, the people voted in the ſame manner as in the Comitia Curiata, or aſſemblies by curiæ. The majority of ſingle votes in every tribe conſtituted the voice of that tribe, and the majority of the tribes decided the queſtion. But the Patricians conſcious of their ſuperiority in the Comitia Centuriata, or aſſemblies by centuries, conſtantly refuſed to obey the Plebiſcita or Decrees made by the people in their aſſemblies by tribes, which they inſiſted were binding to the Plebeians only. After the abolition of the Decemvirate the people obtained a Law :—"That all Laws paſſed in their aſſemblies by tribes ſhould have equal force with thoſe made in the aſſemblies by centuries, and ſhould be equally obligatory to all the Romans without diſtinction."

equally

equally binding as thoſe made in their aſſembly by centuries. This law was firſt made when the Tyranny of the Decemvirs was aboliſhed by the ſecond ſeceſſion of the people to the Sacred Mountain, but was perpetually violated by the overbearing power of the Ariſtocracy. But an event ſimilar to that which occaſioned the firſt ſeceſſion of the people, to which they properly owed the origin of their liberty, was the cauſe of the third and laſt ſeceſſion, which fully compleated that liberty, and gave the fatal blow to the arbitrary Ariſtocratick faction. Veturius, the ſon of Titus Veturius, who had been Conſul and died inſolvent, borrowed a ſum of money of one Plotius to defray the expences of his father's funeral. As the father was greatly indebted to the ſame Plotius, he demanded of young Veturius the payment of both debts which his father and he himſelf had contracted. As the unhappy young man was utterly unable to ſatisfy the demand, Plotius ſeized his unfortunate debtor, and confined him to the work of a ſlave, 'till he had diſcharged both principal and intereſt. Veturius bore his ſervitude with patience, and did his utmoſt to pleaſe his creditor. But as he refuſed to gratify the deteſtable paſſion of the infamous Plotius, he treated him with the utmoſt inhumanity to force him to a compliance. One day he had the good fortune

tune to eſcape out of the houſe of his mercileſs creditor, and fled to the Forum, where he ſhewed his back torn with ſtripes and his body covered with blood, and explained the reaſon of his ſhocking treatment. The people, enraged at ſo dreadful a ſpectacle, demanded an abſolute ſecurity againſt that law, which gave the creditors ſuch a ſhameful power over their inſolvent debtors. For though that law had been aboliſhed near forty years before upon a like occaſion, yet the Patricians, by their ſuperior power, had again revived it. The Conſuls reported the affair to the Senate, who committed Plotius to priſon, and ordered all thoſe who were in cuſtody for debt to be ſet at liberty. The Plebeians, not ſatisfied with theſe trifling conceſſions, inſiſted upon the abſolute abolition of that inhuman law; but they were oppoſed with equal animoſity by the Patricians. Deſpairing therefore of gaining their point by intreaties and remonſtrances, they retired in a body to the Janiculum, reſolutely determined never to enter the city, 'till they had received full ſatisfaction. The Senate, alarmed at this ſeceſſion, had recourſe to their laſt reſource in all deſperate caſes, the creation of a Dictator. Q. Hortenſius was nominated Dictator upon this occaſion, a man of great temper and prudence, and a real friend to liberty. As he was veſted with

abſolute power by virtue of his office, he totally aboliſhed that law which had given ſuch juſt cauſe of uneaſineſs, and, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition of the Senate, revived and confirmed two laws which had been formerly made, though conſtantly violated by the Patricians. One was, "that the decrees made by the Plebeians ſhould be equally obligatory to the Patricians;" the other, "that all laws paſſed in the Senate ſhould be laid before the Comitia, or aſſemblies of the people, either to be confirmed or rejected." Thus the liberty, which the Plebeians had acquired by the firſt ſeceſſion, was confirmed in the plaineſt and ſtrongeſt manner by the laſt, which happened about two hundred and ſix years after. For the Patricians, from that memorable æra, had ſcarce any other advantage over the Plebeians, except what aroſe from their ſuperior wealth, and that reſpect which is naturally paid by inferiors to men of ſuperior birth.

It is evident, from that ſudden change which the Plebeians experienced in the behaviour of the Patricians at the death of Tarquin, that if the Senate could have ſupported themſelves in that arbitrary power, which they ſo viſibly aimed at, the condition of the people would have been juſt like that of the Poliſh peaſants under their imperious Lords. For in that deteſtable Ariſtocracy, the Patri-

cians, not content with the wealth of the Republick, which centered chiefly in their own body, uſed their utmoſt efforts to engroſs the entire poſſeſſion of the lands. The ſeceſſion of the people, and the creation of the Tribunes, defeated the ſchemes they had formed for eſtabliſhing an Ariſtocratick tyranny. But the frequent attempts to revive the Agrarian law prove undeniably, that the Patricians never loſt ſight of their ambitious views of aggrandizing their families by an illegal uſurpation of the conquered lands. Spurius Caſſius, a Patrician, was the firſt author of this law, about eight years after the ſeceſſion, with a view of raiſing himſelf to the regal power by conciliating the affection and intereſt of the people. The law itſelf was certainly juſt, and founded upon that equality in the diſtribution of the land, which was a part of the conſtitution, as ſettled by their founder Romulus. The plea therefore of Caſſius, "That the lands, which "had been conquered by the blood and va-"lour of the people, ſhould be taken from "the rich and applied to the ſervice of the "publick," was founded upon the ſtricteſt equity, as well as the fundamental principles of their conſtitution. Even Appius, the moſt inveterate enemy to the people, acknowledged the juſtice of his propoſal, ſince he moved that commiſſioners ſhould be appointed

pointed by the Senate to fix the boundaries of the land in queſtion, and ſell or let it out in farms for the benefit of the publick. This advice was unanimouſly approved of, and the Senate paſſed a decree, that ten of the moſt ancient conſular Senators ſhould be appointed commiſſioners to carry this ſcheme into execution. This decree at once pacified the people, and ruined Caſſius. For as he had propoſed to divide two-thirds of the lands between the Latines and the Hernici, whoſe aſſiſtance he at that time courted, the people gave him up to the reſentment of the Senate, who condemned him for plotting to introduce a ſingle tyranny, and ordered him to be thrown down the Tarpeian precipice.

This was the firſt riſe of the famous Agrarian law, which occaſioned ſuch frequent conteſts between the Senate and the people, and ſtirred up the firſt civil war in Rome, which ended in the murder of both the Gracchi, about three hundred and fifty years after. For the Senate not only evaded the nomination of the commiſſioners, as they had promiſed in their decree, but, whenever that affair was brought upon the carpet, they acted with an inſincerity and artifice which are highly inconſiſtent with the ſo much vaunted probity of the Roman Senate. Unleſs therefore we attend to the true reaſons upon which the Agrarian law was originally

founded, we can never form a right judgment of the perpetual diſſenſions between the Senate and the Tribunes upon that ſubject. For though the chief blame, in all theſe conteſts, is moſt commonly thrown upon the turbulent and ſeditious temper of the Tribunes, yet, if the real cauſe of thoſe diſſenſions is impartially examined, we ſhall find that moſt of them took riſe from the avarice and injuſtice of the Patricians. But though the tribunitial power was ſometimes made ſubſervient to the intereſted views of ſome ambitious Tribunes, yet no argument can juſtly be drawn from the abuſe of that power againſt its real utility. For how much it was dreaded as the bulwark of the liberty of the people, is evident from this conſideration: that it was reduced almoſt to nothing by Sylla, and afterwards totally abſorbed by Auguſtus and the ſucceeding Emperors, who never looked upon the people as thoroughly inſlaved 'till they had annexed the tribunitial power to the imperatorial dignity.

I remarked before, that when the higheſt dignities and employments in the Republick were laid open to the Plebeians, and the decrees of the people had the ſame force, and affected the Patricians in the ſame manner as thoſe which were iſſued by the Senate, the Democratick power was raiſed to an equality with the Ariſtocratick. But as a third power,

or eſtate (as we term it) was wanting, capable of preſerving the requiſite æquilibrium between the other two, it was impoſſible, from the very nature of the Republican conſtitution, that the equality between the two powers could be long ſupported. The conceſſions made by Hortenſius quieted indeed the civil diſſenſions; and it is remarkable too, that after peace was reſtored to the Republick, the progreſs of the Roman conqueſts was ſo amazingly rapid, that in little more than two hundred years from that period they had ſubjugated the moſt opulent empires in the univerſe. But the ſame conqueſts, which raiſed the Republick to the ſummit of her grandeur, threw too much weight into the Democratick ſcale, and, by totally corrupting the Roman manners, brought on the final ruin of their liberty and conſtitution. For as every conquered Province created ſucceſſively a new Government, theſe new dignities immediately became new objects of avarice and ambition. But as the command of the armies, the government of Provinces, and the higheſt poſts in the ſtate, were diſpoſed of by the ſuffrages of the people; the candidates for thoſe lucrative employments left no means unattempted to ſecure a majority. Hence, as the poor Plebeians were extremely numerous, the man who was able to diſtribute the greateſt largeſſes, or divert the mob

mob with the fineſt ſhews, was generally the moſt ſucceſsful. When the intereſt of the candidates was nearly equal, force was frequently made uſe of to decide the conteſt; and it was not uncommon to ſee the [1] Forum covered with the ſlaughtered bodies of the electors. The Generals who were elected fleeced the Provinces to enable themſelves to keep up their intereſt at home with the people, and connived at the rapines of their ſoldiers to ſecure their affections. Hence at Rome liberty degenerated into the moſt outrageous licentiouſneſs, whilſt the ſoldiers gradually wore off that parental love for their country, which was once the characteriſtick of the Romans, and attached themſelves wholly to the fortunes of their Generals. Hence the moſt ſucceſsful leaders began to look upon themſelves no longer as ſervants, but as maſters of the Republick, and each endeavoured to ſupport his pretenſions by force of arms. The factions of Sylla and Marius filled the city alternately with ſlaughter and rapine, as the fortune of their reſpective leaders prevailed in the courſe of that deſtructive conteſt; and Rome frequently felt the calamitous effects of war in her own bowels, at a time when her victorious arms abroad were adding new Provinces to

[1] The place of election.

her dominions. Theſe factions were far from expiring with their leaders, but broke out again with the ſame baleful fury under the firſt and ſecond Triumvirate. Each of theſe, ſtrictly ſpeaking, were no more than coalitions of the ſame factions, where three chiefs united their ſeveral parties to cruſh every other. When they had accompliſhed this, and ſatiated their ambition, their avarice, and their private reſentments, by the moſt bloody proſcriptions, they quarrelled about the diviſion of power, like captains of banditi about the diviſion of booty, with whom they agreed in principle, and differed only in degree. Theſe quarrels occaſioned thoſe civil wars, which gave the finiſhing blow to the Roman Republick. The ableſt and moſt dangerous man, in each Triumvirate, proved at laſt the conqueror; and Julius Cæſar firſt put thoſe chains upon his country, which Auguſtus rivetted beyond a poſſibility of removal.

All the hiſtorians, from whom we have received any account of the Roman affairs, agree unanimouſly in fixing their conqueſt of Antiochus the Great, as the æra from whence we are to date the riſe of luxury and corruption amongſt them. Livy aſſures us, that luxury was firſt introduced into their city by the army of Manlius at their return from Aſia. They, he informs us, were the firſt who

who made Rome acquainted with the finely ornamented couches, the rich carpets, the embroidered hangings, and other expenſive productions of the looms of Aſia, with all thoſe elegant tables of various forms and workmanſhip, which were eſteemed ſo eſſential a part of that magnificence which they affected in their furniture. They introduced wenches, who ſung and played upon different inſtruments, with dancers of anticks, to heighten the mirth and indulgence of the table. To ſhew to what height they carried the expence and luxury of the table, he adds, with indignation, that a cook, who, by their frugal and temperate anceſtors, was looked upon, from his very office, as the vileſt ſlave in the houſhold, was now eſteemed an officer of mighty conſequence, and cookery was erected into an art, which before was looked upon as the moſt ſervile kind of drudgery. Yet new and ſtrange as theſe firſt ſpecimens might ſeem, Livy aſſures us, that they were but trifles when compared to their ſucceeding luxury. Before that fatal æra the Romans were poor, but they were contented and happy, becauſe they knew no imaginary wants; and whilſt their manners were virtuous, poverty itſelf was honourable, and added a new luſtre to every other virtue. But when once they had contracted a reliſh for the luxury of Aſia, they quickly found that the wealth of

Aſia

Aſia was neceſſary to ſupport it; and this diſcovery as quickly produced a total change in their manners. Before that time the love of glory, and a contempt of wealth, was the ruling paſſion of the Romans. Since that time, money was the only object of their applauſe and deſire. Before, ambition impelled them to war, from a thirſt of dominion; now avarice, for the ſake of plunder to ſupport the expence of luxury. Before, they ſeemed a race of Heroes; they were now a gang of inſatiable robbers. Formerly, when they had reduced a people to obedience, they received them as their allies; they now made the conquered Nations their ſlaves. They fleeced the Provinces, and oppreſſed their friends. As the great offices, which entitled the poſſeſſors to the command of armies, and the government of Provinces, were diſpoſed of by the votes of the people, no method was left unattempted to ſecure a majority of ſuffrages. The candidates for theſe employments, not only exhauſted their own fortunes, but ſtrained their credit to the utmoſt, to bribe the people with ſhews and donatives. To this infamous period we muſt fix the riſe of that torrent of corruption, which ſo quickly deluged the Roman Republick. The ſucceſsful candidates ſet out for their government, like hungry emaciated wolves, to fatten upon the blood of the miſerable Provinces. Cicero makes heavy com-

complaints of the rapine and extortion of theſe rapacious oppreſſors; and his orations againſt Verres, when accuſed by the Sicilians, give us a compleat idea of the behaviour of a Roman Governor in his province. The complaints of the oppreſſed Provincials were inceſſant; but every Governor had his friends amongſt the leading men, whom he ſecured by a ſhare of the plunder, and the weight of their whole intereſt was applied to ſcreen the criminal. Laws indeed were made againſt this crime of peculation, but they were eaſily eluded, becauſe the judges, who were choſen out of the body of the people, were as corrupt as the offenders, and were frequently their aſſociates in villany. Thus corruption made its way into the very vitals of the Republick. Every thing was venal, and the venality had made ſo rapid a progreſs, even in the time of Jugurtha, which was about eighty years after the defeat of Antiochus, as to occaſion the ſevere ſarcaſm of that Prince, recorded by Salluſt, which places the corruption of the Romans in a ſtronger point of view, than the moſt laboured and pathetick deſcriptions of their hiſtorians. "That "Rome had carried her venality to ſo great "a height, as to be ready to ſell herſelf to "deſtruction, if ſhe could but find a pur-"chaſer." When the Romans had beggared the Monarchs, whom they vouchſafed to ſtile their

their friends, and drained the Provinces 'till they had ſcarce any thing left to plunder; the ſame principle which had induced them to pillage the univerſe, impelled them now to prey upon one another[1]. Marius and Sylla were the firſt Romans who ſet that fatal precedent, and were the firſt who bridled Rome with a ſtanding army. The civil power was compelled to give way to the military, and from that period we may truly date the ruin of the Roman liberty. The State continued to fluctuate between Deſpotiſm and Anarchy, 'till it terminated irretrievably under the Cæſars, in the moſt abſolute and moſt infernal tyranny that any people were ever yet curſed with. Marius opened the bloody ſcene, and glutted his followers with the blood and wealth of the friends of Sylla. Sylla repaid the Marian faction in the ſame coin with uſury. Battles were fought in the very ſtreets; and Rome more than once experienced all the horrors of a city taken by ſtorm from her own citizens. Perſonal reſentment and revenge for injuries received, were the pretence on both ſides, but plunder and confiſcation ſeem to have been the chief motives. For the rich were equally looked upon as

[1]—Proſcriptiones innoxiorum ob divitias, crucia'us virorum illuſtrium, vaſtam urbem fuga et cædibus, bona civium miſerorum quaſi Cimbricam prædam, venum aut dono datam. Sall. Frag. p. 142.

enemies,

enemies, and equally proſcribed by both factions, and they alone were ſafe who had nothing worth taking.

If we connect the various ſtrokes interſperſed through what we have remaining of the writings of Salluſt, which he levelled at the vices of his countrymen, we ſhall be able to form a juſt idea of the manners of the Romans in the time of that hiſtorian. From the picture, thus faithfully exhibited, we muſt be convinced, that not only thoſe ſhocking calamities, which the Republick ſuffered during the conteſt between Marius and Sylla, but thoſe ſubſequent and more fatal evils, which brought on the utter extinction of the Roman liberty and conſtitution, were the natural effects of that foreign luxury, which firſt introduced venality and corruption. Though the introduction of luxury from Aſia preceded the ruin of Carthage in point of time, yet, as Salluſt informs us, the dread [1] of that dangerous rival reſtrained the Romans within the bounds of decency and order. [2] But as ſoon as ever that obſtacle was

[1] Ante Carthaginem deletam—metus hoſtilis in bonis artibus civitatem retinebat. Sall. Bell. Jug. p. 80.

[2] Poſtquam remoto metu Punico mores non paulatim ut antea, ſed torrentis modo præcipitati. Sall. Frag. p. 139.

—Rapere, conſumere, ſua parvi pendere, aliena cupere, pudorem, pudicitiam, divina humana promiſcua, nihil penſi, neque moderati habere. De Bell. Cat. pag. 8.

removed,

removed, they gave a full ſcope to their ungoverned paſſions. The change in their manners was not gradual, and by little and little, as before, but rapid and inſtantaneous. Religion, juſtice, modeſty, decency, all regard for divine or human laws, were ſwept away at once by the irreſiſtible torrent of corruption. [1] The nobility ſtrained the privileges annexed to their dignity, and the people their liberty, alike into the moſt unbounded licentiouſneſs. Every one made the dictates of his own lawleſs will his only rule of action. Publick virtue, and the love of their country, which had raiſed the Romans to the empire of the univerſe, were extinct. [2] Money, which alone could enable them to gratify their darling luxury, was ſubſtituted in their place. Power, dominion, honours, and univerſal reſpect, were annexed to the poſſeſſion of money. Contempt, and whatever was moſt reproachful, was the bitter portion of poverty; and to be poor, grew to be the greateſt of all crimes in the eſtimation of the Romans. Thus wealth and poverty contributed alike

[1] Cæpere nobilitas dignitatem, populus libertatem in lubidinem vertere. Bell. Jug. p. 80.

[2] Poſtquam divitiæ honori eſſe cæperunt, & eas gloria, imperium, potentia ſequebatur hebeſcere virtus, paupertas probro haberi, innocentia pro malevolentia duci cæpit. Bell. Cat. p. 8.

to

to the ruin of the Republick. The [1] rich employed their wealth in the acquiſition of power; and their power in every kind of oppreſſion and rapine, for the acquiſition of more wealth. [2] The poor, now diſſolute and deſperate, were ready to engage in every ſeditious inſurrection, which promiſed them the plunder of the rich, and ſet up both their liberty and their country to ſale to the beſt bidder. [3] The Republick, which was the common prey to both, was thus rent to pieces between the contending parties. As an univerſal ſelfiſhneſs is the genuine effect of univerſal luxury, ſo the natural effect of ſelfiſhneſs is to break through every tye, both divine and human, and to ſtick at no kind of exceſſes in the purſuit of wealth, its favourite object. [4] Thus the effects of ſelfiſhneſs will naturally appear in irreligion, breach of faith,

[1] Ita cum potentia avaritia ſine modo, modeſtiaque invadere, polluere, & vaſtare omnia, nihil penſi neque ſancti habere. p. 81.

Sibi quiſque ducere, trahere rapere. De Bell. Jug. p. 81.

[2] Eos paulatim expulſos agris, inertia atque inopia incertas domos habere ſubegit: cæpere alienas opes petere, libertatem ſuam cum Republica venalem habere. Sall. Orat. 2. ad Cæſarem de Repub. Ordinand. p. 197.

[3] Ita omnia in duas partes abſtracta ſunt: Reſpublica, quæ media fuerat, dilacerata. De Bell. Jug. p. 80.

[4] Pecuniæ cupido fidem, probitatem cæteraſque bonas artes ſubvertit; pro his ſuperbiam, crudelitatem Deos negligere, omnia venalia habere edocuit. De Bell. Cat. p. 7.

per-

perjury, a contempt of all the ſocial duties, extortion, frauds in our dealings, pride, cruelty, univerſal venality and corruption. From ſelfiſhneſs ariſes that vicious ambition (if I may be allowed the term) which Salluſt rightly defines, "[1] The luſt of domination:" Ambition, as a paſſion, precedes avarice; for the ſeeds of ambition ſeem almoſt to be innate. The deſire of pre-eminence, the fondneſs for being diſtinguiſhed above the reſt of our fellow-creatures, attends us from the cradle to the grave. Though as it takes its complection, ſo it receives its denomination from the different objects it purſues, which in all are but the different means of attaining the ſame end. But the luſt of domination, here mentioned by Salluſt, tho' generally confounded with ambition, is in reality a different paſſion, and is, ſtrictly ſpeaking, only a different mode of ſelfiſhneſs. For the chief end which we propoſe, by the luſt of domination, is to draw every thing to centre in ourſelves, which we think will enable us to gratify every other paſſion. I confeſs it may be alledged, that ſelf-love and ſelfiſhneſs both ariſe from the general law of ſelf-preſervation, and are but different modes of the ſame principle. I acknowledge, that if we examine ſtrictly all thoſe heroick inſtances of love, friendſhip, or patriotiſm,

[1] Cupido Imperii, id. p. 7.

which

which ſeem to be carried to the moſt exalted degree of diſintereſtedneſs, we ſhall probably find the principle of ſelf-love lurking at the bottom of many of them. But, if we rightly define theſe two principles, we ſhall find an eſſential difference between our ideas of ſelf-love and ſelfiſhneſs. Self-love, within its due bounds, is the practice of the great duty of ſelf-preſervation, regulated by that law which the great Author of our being has given for that very end. Self-love therefore is not only compatible with the moſt rigid practice of the ſocial duties, but is in fact a great motive and incentive to the practice of all moral virtue. Whereas ſelfiſhneſs, by reducing every thing to the ſingle point of private intereſt, a point which it never loſes ſight of, baniſhes all the ſocial virtues, and is the firſt ſpring of action, which impells to all thoſe diſorders, which are ſo fatal to mixed Government in particular, and to ſociety in general. [1] From this poiſonous ſource Salluſt deduces all thoſe evils, which ſpread the peſtilence of corruption over the whole face of the Republick, and changed the mildeſt and moſt upright Government in

[1] Primo pecuniæ, dein imperii cupido crevit, ea quaſi materies omnium malorum fuere — Poſt ubi contagio, quaſi peſtilentia, invaſit, civitas immutata, imperium ex juſtiſſimo atque optumo, crudele intolerandumque factum. De Bell. Cat. p. 7.

the univerſe into the moſt inhuman, and moſt inſupportable tyranny. For as the luſt of domination can never poſſibly attain its end without the aſſiſtance of others, the man, who is actuated by that deſtructive paſſion, muſt, of neceſſity, ſtrive to attach to himſelf a ſet of men of ſimilar principles, for the ſubordinate inſtruments. This is the origin of all thoſe iniquitous combinations, which we call factions. [1] To accompliſh this, he muſt put on as many ſhapes as Proteus; he muſt ever wear the maſk of diſſimulation, and live a perpetual lye. He will court the friendſhip of every man, who is capable of promoting, and endeavour to cruſh every man, who is capable of defeating his ambitious views. Thus his friendſhip and his enmity will be alike unreal, and eaſily convertible, if the change will ſerve his intereſt. [2] As private intereſt is the only tye which can ever connect a faction, the luſt of wealth, which was the cauſe of the luſt of domination, will now become the effect, and muſt be proportional to the ſum total of the demands of the whole faction; and, as the

[1] Aliud clauſum in pectore, aliud promptum in lingua habere, amicitias, inimicitiaſq; non ex re, ſed ex commodo æſtumare, magiſq; vultum, quam ingenium bonum habere. Ibid.

[2] Malitia præmiis exercetur; ubi ea demſeris, nemo omnium gratuitò malus eſt. P. 200.

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latter know no bounds, ſo the former will be alike inſatiable. [1] For when once a man is inured to bribes in the ſervice of faction, he will expect to be paid as well for acting for, as for acting againſt the dictates of his conſcience. A truth, which every miniſter muſt have experienced, who has been ſupported by a faction, and which a late great miniſter (as he frankly confeſſed) found to be the caſe with him during his long adminiſtration. But how deeply ſoever a State may be immerſed in luxury and corruption, [2] yet the man who aims at being the head of a faction for the end of domination, will at firſt cloak his real deſign under an affected zeal for the ſervice of the Government. When he has eſtabliſhed himſelf in power, and formed his party, all who ſupport his meaſures will be rewarded as the friends, all who oppoſe him will be treated as enemies to the Government. The honeſt and uncorrupt citizen will be hunted down as diſaffected,

[1] Nam, ubi malos præmia ſequuntur, haud facile quiſquam gratuitò bonus eſt. Sall. Orat. Philip. contra Lepid. p. 145.

[2] Pauci potentes, quorum in gratia plerique conceſſerant, ſub honeſto patrum, aut plebis nomine dominationes affectabant, bonique & mali cives appellati, non ob merita in Rempublicam (omnibus pariter corruptis) ſed uti quiſque locupletiſſimus & injuria validior, quia præſentia defendebat, pro bono ducebatur. Frag. p. 139.

and all his remonſtrances againſt mal-adminiſtration, will be repreſented as proceeding from that principle. The cant term, *Diſaffection*, will be the watch-word of the faction; and the charge of diſaffection, that conſtant reſource of iniquitous miniſters, that infallible ſign that a cauſe will not ſtand the teſt of a fair enquiry, will be perpetually employed by the tools of power to ſilence thoſe objections which they want argument to anſwer. [1] The faction will eſtimate the worth of their leader, not by his ſervices to his country, for the good of the publick will be looked upon as obſolete and chimerical; but his ability to gratify, or ſcreen his friends, and cruſh his opponents. The leader will fix the implicit obedience to his will, as the teſt of merit to his faction: Conſequently, all the dignities and lucrative poſts will be conferred upon perſons of that ſtamp only, whilſt honeſty and publick virtue will be ſtanding marks of political reprobation. Common juſtice will be denied to the latter in all controverted elections, whilſt the laws will

[1] Idem illi factioſi regunt, dant, adimunt quæ lubet; innocentes circumveniunt: ſuos ad honorem extollunt. Non facinus, non probrum, aut flagitium obſtat, quo minus magiſtratus expetant: quod commodum eſt, trahunt, rapiunt: poſtremo tanquam urbe capta, lubidine ac licentia ſua pro legibus utuntur. Sall. Or. 2. ad Cæſar, p. 196.

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be ſtrained, or over-ruled in favour of the former. Luxury is the certain fore-runner of corruption, becauſe it is the certain parent of indigence: Conſequently, a ſtate ſo circumſtanced will always furniſh an ample ſupply of proper inſtruments for faction. [1] For as luxury conſiſts in an inordinate gratification of the ſenſual paſſions, the more the paſſions are indulged they grow the more importunately craving, 'till the greateſt fortune muſt ſink under their inſatiable demands. Thus luxury neceſſarily produces corruption. For as wealth is eſſentially neceſſary to the ſupport of luxury, wealth will be the univerſal object of deſire in every State where luxury prevails: Conſequently, all thoſe who have diſſipated their private fortunes in the purchaſe of pleaſure, will be ever ready to inliſt in the cauſe of faction for the wages of corruption. A taſte for pleaſure immoderately indulged, quickly ſtrengthens into habit, eradicates every principle of honour

[1] Divitiis, quas honeſte habere licebat, per turpitudinem abuti properabant. Lubido ſtrupri, ganeæ, cæterique cultus non minor inceſſerat.—Veſcendi cauſa, terra mariq; omnia exquirere; dormire priuſquam ſomni cupido eſſet: non famam, aut ſitim, neq; frigus, neq; laſſitudinem operiri; ſed ea omnia luxu antecapere. Hæc juventutem, ubi familiares opes defecerant, ad facinora incendebant. Animus imbutus malis artibus haud facile lubidinibus carebat: eò profuſius omnibus modis quæſtui atque ſumptui deditus erat. Sall. de Bell. Cat. p. 9.

and virtue, and gets poſſeſſion of the whole man. And the more expenſive ſuch a man is in his pleaſures, the greater lengths he will run for the acquiſition of wealth for the end of profuſion. Thus the contagion will become ſo univerſal, that nothing but an uncommon ſhare of virtue can preſerve the poſſeſſor from infection. [1] For when once the idea of reſpect and homage is annexed to the poſſeſſion of wealth alone, honour, probity, every virtue, and every amiable quality will be held cheap in compariſon, and looked upon as aukward and quite unfaſhionable. But as the ſpirit of liberty will yet exiſt in ſome degree in a ſtate which retains the name of Freedom, even though the manners of that ſtate ſhould be generally depraved, an oppoſition will ariſe from thoſe virtuous citizens, who know the value of their birth-right, *Liberty*, and will never ſubmit tamely to the chains of faction. [2] Force then will be call-

[1] Ubi divitiæ claræ habentur, ibi omnia bona vilia ſunt, fides, probitas, pudor, pudicitia. Sall. Orat. 2. ad Cæſ. p. 199.

[2] Itaque omnes conceſſere jam in paucorum dominationem, qui per militare nomen, ærarium, exercitum, regnum, provincias occupavere, et arcem habent ex ſpoliis veſtris: cum interim more pecudum vos multitudo ſingulis habendos, fruendoſque præbetis, exſuti omnibus, quæ majores reliquere: niſi quia voſmet ipſi per ſuffragia, uti præſides olim, nunc dominos deſtinatis. Sall. Frag. Orat. Lepid. ad Pleb. p. 160.

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ed in to the aid of corruption, and a ſtanding-army will be introduced. A military government will be eſtabliſhed upon the ruins of the civil, and all commands and employments will be diſpoſed of at the arbitrary will of lawleſs power. The people will be fleeced to pay for their own fetters, and doomed, like the cattle, to unremitting toil and drudgery for the ſupport of their tyrannical maſters. Or, if the outward form of civil government ſhould be permitted to remain, the people will be compelled to give a ſanction to Tyranny by their own ſuffrages, and to elect oppreſſors inſtead of protectors.

From this genuine portrait of the Roman manners, it is evident to a demonſtration, that the fatal cataſtrophe of that Republick (of which Salluſt himſelf was an eye-witneſs) was the natural effect of the corruption of their manners. It is equally as evident from our author, and the reſt of the Roman hiſtorians, that the corruption of their manners was the natural effect of foreign luxury, introduced and ſupported by foreign wealth. The fatal tendency of theſe evils, was too obvious to eſcape the notice of every ſenſible Roman, who had any regard for liberty, and their ancient conſtitution. Many ſumptuary laws were made to reſtrain the various exceſſes of luxury; but theſe efforts were too feeble to check the overbearing

violence of the torrent. Cato propoſed a ſevere law, inforced by the ſanction of an oath, againſt bribery and corruption at elections; where the ſcandalous traffick of votes was eſtabliſhed by cuſtom as at a publick market. [1] But, as Plutarch obſerves, he incurred the reſentment of both parties by that ſalutary meaſure. The rich were his enemies, becauſe they found themſelves precluded from all pretenſions to the higheſt dignities; as they had no other merit to plead but what aroſe from their ſuperior wealth. [2] The electors abuſed, curſed, and even pelted him as the author of a law which deprived them of the wages of corruption, and reduced them to the neceſſity of ſubſiſting by labour. But this law, if it really paſſed, had as little effect as any of the former; and like the ſame laws in our own country, upon the ſame occaſion, was either evaded by chicane, or over-ruled by power. Our own ſeptennial ſcenes of drunkenneſs,

[1] Διαφθειρόμενα δε τῇ δήμῳ ταῖς δωροδοκίαις ὑπὸ των φιλαρχόντων, καὶ χρωμενων τῳ δεκαζ ισθαι καθάπερ ἐργασία συνηθει τῶν πολλῶν, βελόμενος ἐκκόψαι παντάπασι τὸ νόσημα τῆτο τῆς πόλεως, ἔπεισε δόγμα θέσθαι την σύγκλητον, ὅπως οἱ καταταθέντες ἄρχοντες, ἐι μηδένα κατήγορον, ἔχοιεν, ἀυτοὶ παριόντες ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἔις ένιορκον δικαστήριον ευθύνας διδῶσιν. Plut. in Vit. Cat. p. 126.

[2] Ἔωθεν ἂν ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμα τῇ Κάτωνος, προελθόντος, ἀθρόοι προσπεσόντες ἐβόων, ἐβλασφήμων ἔβαλλον. Plut. ibid.

riot,

riot, bribery, and abandoned perjury, may ſerve to give us an idea of the [1] annual elections of the Romans in thoſe abominable times. Corruption was arrived at its laſt ſtage, and the depravity was univerſal. The whole body of the unhappy Republick was infected, and the diſtemper was utterly incurable. For thoſe exceſſes which formerly were eſteemed the [2] vices of the people, were now, by the force of cuſtom, fixed into habit, become the manners of the people. A moſt infallible criterion, by which we may aſcertain the very point of time, when the ruin of any free ſtate, which labours under theſe evils, may be naturally expected.

The conſpiracies of Cataline and Cæſar againſt the liberty of their country, were but genuine effects of that corruption, which Salluſt has marked out to us, as the immediate cauſe of the deſtruction of the Republick. The end propoſed by each of theſe bad men, and the means employed for that end, were the ſame in both. The difference in their ſucceſs aroſe only from the difference

[1] Hinc rapti faſces prætio: ſectorque favoris
Ipſe ſui populus: lethaliſque ambitus urbi
Annua venali referens certamina campo.
Lucan. Pharſal. lib. 1. Edit. 1506.

[2] Mala ſua, quod malorum ultimum eſt, amant—& definit eſſe remedio locus, ubi quæ fuerant vitia, mores ſunt. Senec. Ep. 39. p. 100.

of

of addreſs and abilities in the reſpective leaders. [1] The followers of Cataline, as Salluſt informs us, were the moſt diſſolute, the moſt profligate, and the moſt abandoned wretches, which could be culled out of the moſt poulous and moſt corrupt city of the univerſe. [2] Cæſar, upon the ſame plan, formed his party, as we learn from Plutarch, out of the moſt infected, and moſt corrupt members of the very ſame State. The vices of the times eaſily furniſhed a ſupply of proper inſtruments. [3] To pilfer the publick money, and to plunder the provinces by violence, though State-crimes of the moſt heinous nature, were grown ſo familiar by cuſtom, that they were looked upon as no more than mere office-perquiſites. [4] The younger people, who are ever moſt ripe for ſedition and inſurrection, were ſo corrupted

[1] In tanta tamque corrupta civitate, Catilina omnium flagitioſorum, atque facinoroſorum circum ſe, tamquam ſtipatorum catervas habebat. Sall. de Bell. Cat. p. 9.

[2] Καισαρος——τὰ νοσοῦντα καὶ διεφθαρμένα τῆς πολιτείας μέρη παράτλοντος καὶ σύνάγοντος πρὸς αὐτὸν. Plut. in Vit. Cat. Min. p. 241.

[3] Peculatus ærarii, & per vim ſociis ereptæ pecuniæ, quæ quanquam gravia ſunt, tamen conſuetudine jam pro nihilo habentur. Sall. de Bell. Jug. p. 73.

[4] Adeo juventus luxu atque avaritia corrupta eſt, uti merito dicatur, genitos eſſe, qui neque ipſi habere poſſent res familiares, neque alios pati. Sall. Frag. p. 139.

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by luxury, that they might be deſervedly termed, "an abandoned race, whoſe diſſipation made it impracticable for them to keep their own private fortunes; and whoſe avarice would not ſuffer their fellow-citizens to enjoy the quiet poſſeſſion of theirs."

It is not at all ſtrange that Rome thus circumſtanced ſhould fall a victim to the corruption of her own citizens: nor that the Empire of the univerſe, the toil and labour of ages, to which the Romans had waded through ſeas of blood, ſhould be deſtined to feed the deteſtable vices of a few monſters, who were a diſgrace even to human nature. The total change of the Roman conſtitution, the unlimited Tyranny of the Emperors, and the abject ſlavery of the people, were all effects of the ſame cauſe, extended in degree by a natural progreſſion. The Romans in fact were no more; the name indeed ſubſiſted, but the idea affixed to that name, was as totally changed as their ancient conſtitution. In the time of Pyrrhus the Roman Senate appeared an aſſembly of Kings to his ambaſſador Cyneas. When the Eaſt had felt the force of the Roman arms, the moſt deſpotick princes received the orders of a Roman Senate, and executed them with as prompt obedience, as a ſlave would do the commands of his maſter. A deputy from the Roman Senate made a haughty Mo-

Monarch tremble at the head of a victorious army, [1] compelled him to reſign all his conqueſts, and return inglorioufly home, by a ſingle motion of his walking-ſtick.

What an elevated idea muſt this give us of the Roman manners, whilſt that haughty people retained their freedom! Nothing is more grand; nothing more ſtriking. Shift but the ſcene, and view the manners of the Romans when enſlaved. Nothing is ſo abjectly ſervile, nothing ſo deſpicable. We ſee the Roman Senate deifying the worſt of mankind; wretches, who had ſunk even below humanity, and offering the adoration of incenſe to theſe idols of their own making, who were more contemptible than the very ſtone and wooden repreſentatives of their deities. Inſtead of giving laws to Monarchs, and deciding the fate of nations, [2] we ſee the auguſt Roman Senate run trembling like ſlaves at the ſummons of their maſter Domitian, to debate in form about the important buſineſs of dreſſing a turbot. The Majeſty of the Roman people, which received the tributary homage of the univerſe, expired together with their liberty. That people, who diſpoſed of the higheſt offices in the go-

[1] Popilius to Antiochus Epiph. Liv. lib. 45. p. 672.

[2] Juv. Sat. 4.

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vernment, the command of armies, provinces and kingdoms, were ſunk into a herd of diſpirited ſlaves. Their total inſignificancy ſcreened them from the fatal effects of the caprices of their Tyrants. They dragged on a wretched being in a ſtate of idleneſs and poverty, in the midſt of ſlavery; and the utmoſt extent of their wiſhes amounted to no more, [1] than bread for their daily ſubſiſtence, and diverſions for their amuſement. The Emperors ſupplied the one by their frequent largeſſes of corn, and gratified the other by their numerous publick ſhews. Hence hiſtorians obſerve, that the moſt infamous of their Tyrants were as fond of Raree-ſhews, as the mob themſelves; and as they were by much the moſt profuſe of all their Emperors, their deaths were always moſt regretted by the people. So ſtriking is the contraſt between a ſtate when bleſſed with liberty, and the ſame ſtate when reduced to ſlavery by the corruption of its people!

As I have already made ſome reflections upon that paſſion for theatrical entertainments, which prevailed at Athens, I cannot

[1] —— Ex quo ſuffragia nulli
Vendimus, effugit Curas. Nam qui dabat olim
Imperium, faſces, legiones, omnia, nunc ſe
Continet, atque duas tantum res anxius optat
Panem & Circenſes. Juv. Sat. 10. lin. 77.

Otium cum ſervitio. Sall. Frag. p. 143.

help

help obſerving, that after the introduction of luxury, the fondneſs for that kind of diverſion amongſt the Romans, was at leaſt equal to that of the Athenians. The Romans ſeem to have been ſtrangers to every kind of ſtage-plays for the firſt four hundred years. Their firſt attempts of that kind were rude and ſimple, and not unlike the ancient mummery at our country wakes, or Chriſtmas gambols. The regular Drama was imported together with the luxury of Greece, but every ſpecies of this kind of entertainment, whether tragedy, comedy, farce, or pantomime, [1] was comprehended under the general denomination of ſtage-plays, and the different performers alike ranged under the general term of [2] players. The profeſſion itſelf was reckoned ſcandalous, and proper only for ſlaves, and if once a Roman citizen appeared upon the ſtage, he immediately forfeited his right of voting, and every other privilege of a free man. Upon this account Cicero ſeems to lament the fate of his friend Roſcius, when he tells us, "[3] that he was ſo ſuperior to all as a player, that he alone ſeemed worthy of appearing upon

[1] Ludi Scenici.

[2] Hiſtriones.

[3] Etenim cum artifex ejuſmodi ſit; ut ſolus dignus videatur eſſe, qui in ſcena ſpectetur: tum vir ejuſmodi eſt,

upon the ſtage: but of ſo exalted a character, as a man, that of all men he deſerved leaſt to be doomed to ſo ſcandalous a profeſſion." Suetonius, ſpeaking of the licentiouſneſs and inſolence of the players, takes notice of an ancient law, which impowered the prætors and ædiles to whip thoſe players publickly, who gave the leaſt offence, or did not perform to the ſatisfaction of the people. [1] Though Auguſtus, as the ſame hiſtorian informs us, exempted players from the ignominy of that law, yet he took care to [2] reſtrain them within the bounds of decency, and good manners. For he ordered Stephanio, a celebrated comedian, to be whipped publickly through all the three threatres, and afterwards baniſhed him, for preſuming privately to keep a Roman matron diſguiſed un-

eſt, ut ſolus dignus videatur, qui eò non accedat. Orat. pro Roſc. Edit. Glaſg. p. 43.

[1] Divus Auguſtus immunes verberum hiſtriones quondam reſponderat. Tacit. c. 14. p. 42. Edit. Glaſg.

Coercitionem in hiſtriones magiſtratibus in omni tempore et loco lege vetere permiſſam ademit. Suet. in Vit. Aug. p. 163.

[2] Hiſtrionum licentiam adeo compeſcuit, ut Stephanionem Togatarium, cui in puerilem habitum circumtonſam matronam miniſtraſſe compererat, per tria theatra virgis cœſum relegaverit. Hylam pantomimum, querente prætore, in atrio domus ſuæ, nemine excluſo, flagellis verberaverit; et Pyladem urbe atque Italia ſubmoverit, quod ſpectatorem à quo exſibilabatur, demonſtraſſet digito, conſpicuumque feciſſet. Ibid.

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der the habit of his boy. Upon a complaint from the Prætor he made Hylas the pantomime be laſhed openly in the court of his own palace, to which place the offender had fled for refuge; and baniſhed Pylades, one of the moſt eminent players, not only from Rome but even from Italy, for affronting one of the audience who had hiſſed him upon the ſtage. But theſe reſtraints ſeem to have expired with Auguſtus. For we find the pride and inſolence of the players carried to ſo great a height in the reign of his ſucceſſor Tiberius, as to occaſion their total baniſhment. The fondneſs of the populace for the entertainments of the theatre, and the folly of the degenerate nobility, were the cauſes of this alteration. [1] For both Pliny and Seneca aſſure us, that perſons of the very firſt rank and faſhion were ſo ſcandalouſly mean, as to pay the moſt obſequious court to the players, to dangle at their levees, to attend them openly in the ſtreets like their ſlaves; and treat them like the maſters, inſtead of the ſervants of the publick. Every eminent player had his party, and theſe ridiculous factions intereſted themſelves ſo warmly in the cauſe of their reſpective favourites, that the theatres became a perpetual ſcene of

[1] Oſtendam nobiliſſimos juvenes mancipia pantomimorum. Senec. Epiſt. 47. p. 118.

riot

riot and diſorder. [1] The nobility mingled with the mob in theſe abſurd conflicts; which always ended in bloodſhed, and frequently in murder. The remonſtrances and authority of the magiſtrates had ſo little effect, that they were obliged to have recourſe to the Emperor. Bad as Tiberius was, yet he was too wiſe to tolerate ſuch ſhameful licentiouſneſs. He laid the caſe before the Senate, and informed them, that the players were the cauſe of thoſe ſcandalous riots which diſturbed the repoſe of the publick: that they ſpread lewdneſs and debauchery through all the chief families; that they were arrived to ſuch a height of profligacy and inſolence, through the protection of their factions, that the authority of the Senate itſelf was requiſite to reſtrain them within proper bounds. [2] Upon this remonſtrance they were driven out of Italy as a publick nuiſance; and Suetonius informs us, that all the frequent and united petitions of the peo-

[1] Variis dehinc et ſæpius irritis prætorum quæſtibus, poſtremò Cæſar de immodeſtia hiſtrionum retulit; multa ab iis in publicum ſeditioſe, fœda per domos tentari—eo flagitiorum & virium veniſſe, ut auctoritate patrum coercendum ſit. Pulſi tum hiſtriones Italia. Tacit. Annal. 4. p. 134.

[2] Cæde in theatro per diſcordiam admiſſa, capita factionum & hiſtriones propter quos diffidebatur, relegavit: nec ut revocaret unquam ullis populi precibus potuit evinci. Suet. in Tib. c. 37.

ple could never prevail upon Tiberius to recall them.

Auguſtus affected an extreme fondneſs for all kinds of diverſions; he invited the moſt celebrated players of every denomination into Italy, and treated the people, at an immenſe expence, with every kind of entertainment, which the theatre or circus could furniſh. This is remarked as an inſtance of that refined policy of which he was ſo thorough a maſter. For that artful prince was not yet firmly ſettled in his newly uſurped power. He well knew, that if he gave the people time to cool and reflect, they might poſſibly thwart the execution of his ambitious ſchemes. He therefore judged that the beſt expedient to prepare them for the yoke of ſlavery would be, to keep them conſtantly intoxicated by one perpetual round of jollity and diverſions. That this was the opinion of thinking people, at that time, is evident from that remarkably pertinent anſwer of Pylades the player to Auguſtus, tranſmitted to us by Dion Caſſius. Pylades, as I have already obſerved, had been baniſhed by Auguſtus for a miſdemeanor, but pardoned and recalled to gratify the humour of the people. At his return, when Auguſtus reproved him with quarrelling with one Bathyllus, a perſon of the ſame profeſſion, but protected by his favourite Mæcenas; Pylades is reported

ed to have made this bold and ſenſible anſwer: "'It is your true intereſt, Cæſar, that "the people ſhould idle away that time up-"on us and our affairs, which they might "otherwiſe employ in prying too narrowly "into your government."

I am far from being an enemy to the ſtage. On the contrary, I think the ſtage under proper regulations might be rendered highly uſeful. For of all our publick diverſions, the ſtage, if purged from the obſcenity of farce, and the low buffoonery of pantomime, is certainly capable of affording infinitely the moſt rational, and the moſt manly entertainment. But when I ſee the ſame diſorders in our own theatres, which were ſo loudly complained of in the time of Tiberius; when the ridiculous conteſts between contending players are judged to be of ſuch mighty importance, as to ſplit the publick into the ſame kind of factions; when theſe factions intereſt themſelves ſo warmly in the ſupport of the ſuppoſed merit of their reſpective favourites, as to proceed to riots, blows, and the moſt extravagant indecencies; I cannot help wiſhing for the interpoſition of the reforming ſpirit of Auguſtus. And when I ſee the ſame inſatiable fond-

' Συμφέρει σοὶ, Καισαρ, περὶ ἡμᾶς τὸν δῆμον ἀποδιατρίβέσθαι. Dion. Caſſ. lib. 54. p. 533.

neſs for diverſions, the ſame unmeaning taſte (ſo juſtly ridiculed by [1] Horace in his countrymen) prevail in our own nation, which mark the moſt degenerate times of Greece and Rome, I cannot but look upon them as a certain indication of the frivolous and effeminate manners of the preſent age.

[1] Verùm equitis quoque jam migravit ab aure voluptas
Omnis, ad incertos oculos, & gaudia vana.
Hor. Epiſt. 1. lib. 2. lin. 187.

Tanto cum ſtrepitu ludi ſpectantur, et artes,
Divitiæque peregrinæ: quibus oblitus actor
Quum ſtetit in ſcena, occurrit dextera lævæ:
Dixit adhuc aliquid? nil ſane. Quid placet ergo?
Lana Tarentino violas imitata veneno.
Ibid. lin. 203.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The real CAUSE of the rapid Declenſion of the ROMAN REPUBLICK.

DIONYSIUS of Halicarnaſſus obſerves,[1] that Romulus formed his new government in many reſpects after the model of that of Sparta, which accounts for that great reſemblance, we evidently meet with between the Roman and Spartan conſtitutions. I may add too, that we cannot help obſerving as great a reſemblance for ſome ages at leaſt between the manners of both thoſe people. For we find the ſame ſimplicity in their houſes, diet and apparel; the ſame contempt for wealth, and quite to the laſt period of their liberty, the ſame warlike genius. Publick ſpirit and the love of their country was carried in both ſtates to the higheſt pitch of enthuſiaſm; it was deaf to the voice of nature itſelf, and that amiable virtue wore a kind of ſavage aſpect at Rome and Sparta. But the alteration of their manners, which alike preceded the loſs both of the Spartan and Roman liberty, will admit of no kind of compariſon either

[1] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 2. p. 65.

as to degree or progreſs. Luxury and corruption ſtole in by very ſlow degrees, and were never carried to any remarkable height amongſt the Spartans. But, as [1] Salluſt beautifully expreſſes it, the Roman manners were precipitated at once to the depth of corruption, after the manner of a reſiſtleſs torrent. I obſerve that the deſtruction of Carthage is fixed upon by that elegant hiſtorian, as the æra from which the riſe of this rapid degeneracy is to be dated. He aſſigns too the removal of the dread occaſioned by that dangerous rival, as the cauſe of this ſudden and aſtoniſhing change. Becauſe, according to his reaſoning, they could then give a full looſe to the impetuous fury of their paſſions, without reſtraint or fear. But the cauſe here aſſigned is by no means equal to the effect. For though it might contribute in ſome meaſure to accelerate the progreſs of luxury, and conſequently the corruption of their manners; yet the real cauſe of their ſudden degeneracy was widely different.

The Romans founded their ſyſtem of policy, at the very origin of their ſtate, upon that beſt and wiſeſt principle, "The fear of the Gods, a firm belief of a divine

[1] Mores majorum non paulatim ut antea, ſed torrentis modo precipitati. Salluſt. Fragment. p. 139.

ſuper-

ſuperintending Providence, and a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments:" Their children were trained up in this belief from tender infancy, which took root and grew up with them by the influence of an excellent education, where [1] they had the benefit of example as well as precept. Hence we read of no heathen nation in the world, where both the publick and private duties of religion were ſo ſtrictly adhered to, and ſo ſcrupulouſly obſerved as amongſt the Romans. They imputed their good or bad ſucceſs to their obſervance of theſe duties, and they received publick proſperities or publick calamities, as bleſſings conferred, or puniſhments inflicted by their Gods. Their [2] hiſtorians hardly ever give us an account of any defeat received by that people, which they do not aſcribe to the omiſſion, or contempt of ſome religious ceremony by their Generals. For though the ceremonies there mentioned, juſtly appear to us inſtances of the moſt abſurd, and moſt extravagant ſuperſtition, yet as they were eſteemed eſſential acts of religion by the Romans, they muſt conſequently carry all the force of religious principle. We neither exceeded, ſays

[1] Nulla unquam Reſpublica ſanctior, nec bonis exemplis ditior fuit. Liv. in Præfat.

[2] Dionyſ. Halicarn. lib. 2. p. 61, 62.

[1] Cicero, ſpeaking of his countrymen, the Spaniards in number, nor did we excel the Gauls in ſtrength of body, nor the Carthaginians in craft, nor the Greeks in arts or ſciences. [2] But we have indiſputably ſurpaſſed all the nations in the univerſe in piety and attachment to religion, and in the only point which can be called true wiſdom, a thorough conviction, that all things here below are directed, and governed by Divine Providence. To this principle alone Cicero wiſely attributes the grandeur and good fortune of his country. For what man is there, ſays he, who is convinced of the exiſtence of the Gods, but muſt be convinced at the ſame time, [3] that our mighty Empire owes its origin, its increaſe, and its preſervation, to the protecting care of their divine providence. A plain proof that theſe continued to be the real ſentiments of the wiſer Romans, even in the corrupt times of Cicero. From this principle proceeded that reſpect for, and ſubmiſſion to their laws, and that

[1]—Tamen nec numero Hiſpanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pœnos, nec artibus Græcos.

[2] Sed pietate ac religione, atque hac unâ ſapientiâ, quod deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perſpeximus, omnes gentes nationeſque ſuperavimus. Cic. de Haruſ. Reſp. p. 189.

[3] Quis eſt qui——cum Deos eſſe intellexerit, non intelligat eorum numine hoc tantum imperium eſſe natum, et auctum et retentum. Ibid. p. 188.

tem-

temperance, moderation, and contempt for wealth, which are the beſt defence againſt the encroachments of injuſtice and oppreſſion. Hence too aroſe that inextinguiſhable love for their country, which, next to the Gods, they looked upon as the chief object of veneration. [1] This they carried to ſuch a height of Enthuſiaſm, as to make every human tye of ſocial love, natural affection, and ſelf-preſervation, give way to this duty to their dearer country. Becauſe they not only loved their country as their common mother, but revered it as a place which was dear to their Gods; [2] which they had deſtined to give laws to the reſt of the univerſe, and conſequently favoured with their peculiar care and protection. Hence proceeded that obſtinate and undaunted courage, that inſuperable contempt of danger, and death itſelf in defence of their country, which compleat the idea of the Roman character, as it is drawn by hiſtorians in the virtuous ages of the Republick. As long as the manners of the Romans were regulated by this firſt great principle of religion,

[1] Cari ſunt parentes, cari liberi, propinqui et familiares: ſed omnes omnium caritates patriæ una complexa eſt. Cic. de Offic.

[2] Pro qua patria, mori, et cui nos totos dedere, et in qua noſtra omnia ponere, et quaſi conſecrare debemus. Cic. de Leg.

they

they were free and invincible. But the Atheiſtical doctrine [1] of Epicurus, which in-

[1] It has been remarked *, " that if I had mentioned " Stoiciſm upon this occaſion as the root of Atheiſm, " it might have been more proper; becauſe a true Stoic " was a profeſſed Atheiſt." That the fundamental principles of the Stoics tended to Atheiſm, I readily grant: but as the real philoſophers of that ſect inculcated a thorough contempt for what are called the good things of this life, and were extremely auſtere in their morals; their Doctrines ſeem to have had a very different influence upon the manners of the people, wherever they were received, from thoſe of the Epicureans.—Brutus and Cato, the inflexible Champions of liberty, and almoſt the only virtuous characters in that corrupt period, were rigid Stoics.—Julius Cæſar, who ſubverted the Conſtitution of his Country, was a thorough Epicurean, both in principle and practice. His principles we plainly ſee in Salluſt, where he urges the total extinction of our being at death, as an argument for ſparing the lives of Cataline's accomplices. For he audaciouſly affirms to the Senate: —" that death as a puniſhment was ſo far from being " an evil, that it releaſed us from all our ſorrows, when " labouring under diſtreſs and miſery; that it put a final " period to all the evils of this life, beyond which there " was no longer room either for grief or joy." Thus, as the learned Dr. Warburton juſtly remarks, " he took " occaſion, with a licentiouſneſs 'till then unknown to " that auguſt aſſembly, to explain and inforce the *avowed* " principles of Epicurus (of whoſe ſect he was) concern- " ing *the Mortality of the Soul.*" Divine Legation, part 2d. pages 111, 112, laſt edition. That his manners were notoriouſly infamous, we may learn from the hiſtory of his life in Suetonius, where he is termed *the huſband of every woman, and the wife of every man:* Omnium Mulierum virum, & omnium Virorum Mulierum. Sueton. in vit. Jul. Cæſ. c. 52. ad finem.

* Critical Review, March, 1759.

ſinuated

ſinuated itſelf at Rome, under the reſpectable name of Philoſophy, after their acquaintance with the Greeks, undermined and deſtroyed this ruling principle. I allow that luxury, by corrupting manners, had weakened this principle, and prepared the Romans for the reception of Atheiſm, which is the never-failing attendant of luxury. But as long as this principle remained, it controuled manners, and checked the progreſs of luxury, in proportion to its influence. But when the introduction of Atheiſm had deſtroyed this principle, the great bar to corruption was removed, and the paſſions at once let looſe to run their full career without check, or controul. The introduction therefore of the Atheiſtical tenets [1] attributed to Epicurus, was the real cauſe of that rapid depravity of the Roman manners, which has never been ſatisfactorily accounted for, either by Salluſt, or any other hiſtorians.

The learned, I know, are not a little divided in their opinions about Epicurus. But

[1] I here mean the tenets of the *Epicurean Atheiſts*, as they are termed by the very learned Mr. Baxter in his treatiſe on the Immortality of the Soul; where he has confuted them at large in the firſt volume of that admirable work.

Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul, Vol. 1. p. 355.

a diſ-

a diſquiſition into what were, or were not the real tenets of that philoſopher, would be wholly foreign to my purpoſe. By the doctrine of the Epicureans, I mean that ſyſtem which Lucretius has dreſſed up in his poem with all the beauties of poetry, and all the elegance of diction. This, like the reſt of the Atheiſtick ſyſtems, which are attributed to moſt of the Grecian philoſophers, is pregnant with the wildeſt abſurdities that ever entered into the human imagination. Epicurus, [1] if Lucretius has given us his genuine tenets,

[1] It has been remarked, that the Diſciples of the ancient Greek philoſophers have blended ſo many of their own opinions with the Doctrine of their maſters, that it is often difficult to diſtinguiſh the genuine tenets of the latter, from the ſpurious ones which have been interpolated by their followers.—Thus Epicurus taught that the Summum Bonum or Supreme Good conſiſted in pleaſure. His defenders inſiſt, that he placed it in that refined pleaſure which is inſeparable from the practice of virtue. His enemies affirm, that he meant the groſſer pleaſure which ariſes wholly from the ſenſual paſſions.—His friends reply, that this Notion was firſt broached by the diſſolute part of his diſciples, who moſt injuriouſly fathered it upon Epicurus, and then alledged his authority as a plea for their debaucheries:——they add, that the true Epicureans, who adhered rigidly to the genuine tenets of their maſter, always treated theſe ſpurious diſciples as ſophiſts and impoſtors. But even allowing this to be a true ſtate of the caſe; yet that the materiality and diſſolution of the human ſoul at death was a genuine tenet of Epicurus, is a truth which the moſt ſanguine of his admirers are not able to deny. As this pernicious tenet therefore was equally

tenets, aſcribes the formation of the univerſe to the fortuitous concourſe of ſenſeleſs atoms of matter. His maſter, Democritus, from whom he borrowed his ſyſtem, aſſerts the ſame. But Epicurus has exceeded him in abſurdity. For Democritus, if we may credit Plutarch, endowed his atoms with a certain living intelligence, which Epicurus ſcorns to make uſe of. He boldly deduces life, intelligence, and free-will itſelf, from the direct, oblique, and other various motions of his inanimate atoms. He admits a ſort of inſignificant beings, whom he terms Gods; but as he would not allow them to have any hand in the formation of his univerſe, ſo neither will he ſuffer them to have the leaſt ſhare in the conduct of it. He has ſhewed them plainly, that he could

equally held, and publickly taught by both theſe kinds of Epicureans, a very ſmall knowledge of human nature will enable us to decide, which of the two oppoſite notions of pleaſure was moſt likely to prevail, and gain the greateſt number of proſelytes amongſt a luxurious and corrupt people.

The diſſolute manners of the Romans in the laſt period of their Republick, prove evidently, in my opinion, that the ſenſual doctrines of the later Epicureans were almoſt univerſally received. And if the evidence of Horace in his humourous deſcription of the manners of thoſe philoſophers is to be depended upon, they ſeem to have ingroſſed the *name* of the *ſect* wholly to themſelves.

Me pinguem et nitidum bene cura tacute viſes;
Cum ridere voles, *Epicuri de Grege porcum.*

Hor. Epiſt. 4. lib. 1.

do

do without them; and, as he has made them ſo egregiouſly inſignificant as to be able to do neither good nor harm, he has packed them off at a diſtance, to live an indolent, lazy life, and to divert themſelves juſt as they think proper. Thus he has got rid of the troubleſome doctrine of a divine ſuperintending Providence. Sometimes he forgets himſelf, and ſeems to deny their very exiſtence. For he tells us in one place, [1] that the whole univerſe contains nothing but matter and empty ſpace, or what ariſes from the caſual concurrence of theſe two principles: Conſequently, that no third nature, different from theſe two, can poſſibly be proved to exiſt either by the cognizance of our ſenſes, or by the utmoſt efforts of our reaſoning faculty. He teaches, that the ſoul is compoſed of the fineſt and moſt ſubtile atoms, conſequently diſcerpable and mortal. That the identity of man conſiſts in the union of theſe finer corpuſcles with the groſſer ones, which compoſe the body. [2] That, at their

[1] Omnis, ut eſt igitur per ſe natura duabus
Conſiſtit rebus; nam corpora ſunt et inane.
Ergo præter inane et corpora tertia per ſe.
Nulla poteſt rerum in numero natura relinqui
Nec quæ ſub cenſus cadat ullo tempore noſtros
Nec ratione animi quam quiſquam poſſit apiſci.

[2] Et nebula ac fumus quoniam diſcedit in auras;

Crede

their diſunion by death, the ſoul evaporates, and is diſſipated in the upper regions, from whence it firſt diſtilled, and the ſame man exiſts no more. Nay, he is ſo amazingly abſurd as to aſſert, [1] that if the ſoul, after its ſeparation, ſhould ſtill retain its conſciouſneſs, and, after a length of time, by ſome lucky jumble of his atoms, ſhould happen to animate another body, this new compound would be quite a different man: Conſequently, that this new man would be no more intereſted in the actions of the former, than the former would be reſponſible for the behaviour of the latter, or for that of any future man, who might happen hereafter to be produced by another caſual aſſemblage of the atoms of the ſame ſoul, united to thoſe of another body. This doctrine is plainly ſtolen from the Pythagorean ſyſtem of the tranſmigration of ſouls; but mutilated, and miſerably perverted to the purpoſes of Atheiſm. The abſurdities in this wild philoſophy are ſo ſelf-evident, that to attempt a refutation of them, would be an affront to common ſenſe. Yet, from

Crede animam quoque diffundi, multoque perire
Ocius, et citius diſſolvi corpora prima,
Cum ſemel omnibus è membris ablata receſſit.

[1] Et ſi jam noſtro ſentit de corpore, poſtquam
Diſtracta eſt animi natura, animæque poteſtas:
Nil tamen hoc ad nos; qui cætu conjugioque
Corporis atque animæ conſiſtimus uniter apti.

this

this ſource, theſe philoſophers draw their pretended conſolations againſt the fear of death: "[1] That at death the identity of the man abſolutely ceaſes, and we totally loſe our exiſtence." Yet, from theſe excellent comforters, our modern ſceptics have revived their ſenſeleſs tenet of annihilation to ſerve the cauſe of libertiniſm. The grand *Deſideratum*, in libertiniſm, is, to be able to give an unbounded looſe to the ſenſual paſſions to their very utmoſt extent, without any impertinent hints from a certain diſagreeable monitor, called Conſcience, and the dread of an after-reckoning. Now as both theſe terrors are removed by this ſyſtem of annihilation, it is no wonder that libertines, who abound in a corrupt licentious age, ſhould fly eagerly to ſo comfortable a doctrine, which at once ſilences thoſe enemies to their pleaſures. This is the creed introduced by the ſect of Epicurus amongſt the Romans, which eaſily accounts for that ſudden, and univerſal revolution in their manners. For manners can never be ſo effectually, and ſo ſpeedily depraved, [2] as by a to-

[1] Nil igitur mors eſt, ad nos neque pertinet hilum,
Quandoquidem natura animi mortalis habetur:
—Ubi non erimus: cum corporis, atque animaï
Diſcidium fuerit, quibus è ſumus uniter apti,
Scilicet haud nobis quicquam, qui non erimus tum,
Accidere omnino poterit, ſenſumque movere.

[2] Epicurus vero ex animis hominum extraxit radicitus reli-

a total extinction of all religious principle, and all religious principle muſt be neceſſarily ſubverted wherever this doctrine of annihilation is received. I allow that Lucretius gives us ſome excellent maxims from Epicurus, and inveighs in many places againſt the vices of his countrymen. [1] But the cheat is too groſs and palpable, and only proves, that he has gilt over the pill of Atheiſm to make it go down more ſmoothly. For how can a ſuperſtructure ſtand when the foundation is taken away; and of what ſervice is the beſt ſyſtem of morality when the ſanction of future rewards and puniſhments, the great motive which ſhould enforce the practice, is removed by the denial of a Providence, and the doctrine of annihilation? Cicero informs us, that all the fine things, which Epicurus aſſerts of the exiſtence of his Gods, and their excellent nature, are mere grimace, and only thrown out to ſcreen him from cenſure. For he could not be ignorant, that the laws of his country puniſhed every man with the utmoſt ſeverity, who ſtruck at that fundamental principle of all religion, the exiſtence of a

religionem, quum Diis immortalibus et opem et gratiam ſuſtulit. Cic. de Nat. Deor. p. 76 & 77.

[1] At etiam liber eſt Epicuri de ſanctitate. Ludimur ab homine non tam faceto, quam ad ſcribendi licentiam libero. Quæ enim poteſt eſſe ſanctitas, ſi Dii humana non curant? Cic. de Nat. Deor. p. 78.

Deity. [1] Cicero therefore, who had thoroughly examined his tenets, affirms him, by his own principles, to have been a downright Atheiſt. For in reality, a man who ſhould aſſert the exiſtence of ſuch idle Gods, as are neither capable of doing good or hurt, muſt, if he expects to be believed, be a greater fool than the man, "Who ſays in his heart there is no God at all." Yet this ſtrange ſyſtem, though fraught with ſuch abſurdities and contradictions as could ſcarce be palmed upon the genius of an Hottentot, has been implicitly ſwallowed by too many of thoſe gentlemen, who affect to call themſelves the *eſprit forts* of the preſent age. Theſe are the Atheiſtical tenets of Epicurus, preſerved by Lucretius in his beautiful poem, which, like poiſon, conveyed in ſweets, pleaſe and murder at the ſame time [2].

The

[1] Verius eſt igitur nimirum illud quod familiaris omnium noſtrûm Poſidonius diſſeruit in libro quinto de naturâ Deorum, nullos eſſe Deos Epicuro videri: quæque is de Diis immortalibus dixerit, invidiæ deteſtandæ gratia dixiſſe, p. 78.

[2] I am much obliged to the Gentlemen who write the Critical Review for the compliments paid to my little performance in their Review for March 1759. Their candid remarks upon theſe quotations from Cicero have been truly ſerviceable; as they have induced me to read over his philoſophical works with cloſe attention, as well as the writings of ſome of our ableſt moderns upon that ſubject.

The

The Greeks were early infected with this execrable doctrine, and ſhew the effect it

The principles of the New Academy, that doubting ſect, which Cicero had eſpouſed, led ſo directly to Scepticiſm, that he keeps us in a ſtate of perpetual doubt and uncertainty as to his opinions. Mr. Baxter in his Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul, Vol. II. p. 70, complaining of Cicero's inconſiſtencies and ſelf-contradictions, obſerves, that——" as philoſophers, he teaches " men to be Sceptics, or to maintain *that truth is not to be* " *perceived.*" And afterwards adds, " But it is long " ſince it hath been obſerved of this *great man*, that his " *academical writings are at variance* with his other works; " and that he may be confuted out of himſelf, and in his " own words."

Dr. Warburton expatiates largely upon the great difficulties there are in getting to Cicero's *real ſentiments*. I ſhall mention only two of them, and in his own words: " A fourth difficulty ariſes from Tully's purpoſe in writ- " ing his works of philoſophy; which was, not to deliver " his own opinion on any point of Ethics or Metaphy- " ſics; but to explain to his Countrymen in the moſt " intelligible manner, whatſoever the Greeks had taught " concerning them. In the execution of which deſign, " no ſect could ſo well ſerve his turn as the *New Academy*, " whoſe principle it was, *not to interfere with their own opi-* " *nions*, &c. But the principal difficulty proceeds from the " *ſeveral* and *various* characters he *ſuſtained* in his life and " writings; which habituated him to feign and diſſem- " ble his opinions. Here (though he acted neither a " weak nor an unfair part) he becomes perfectly inſcru- " table. He may be conſidered as an orator, a ſtateſ- " man, and a philoſopher; characters all equally *per-* " *ſonated*, and no one more the *real man* than the other; " but each of them taken up and laid down, for the oc- " caſion. This appears from the numerous inconſiſten- " cies we find in him throughout the courſe of his ſuſ-

" taining

had upon their manners by their violation of publick faith, and contempt for the moſt ſacred tyes of religion. [1] 'Truſt, ſays Polybius,

" taining them, &c." And afterwards, p. 171. the Dr. adds,——" We meet with numbers of the like contra-" dictions delivered in his own perſon, and under his " philoſophical character;" of which he gives us ſeveral inſtances. In the note upon the word Perſonated, p. 169, the Dr. obſerves; "——that as a philoſopher, his end " and deſign in writing was not to deliver his own opi-" nion; but to explain the Grecian philoſophy; on " which account he blames thoſe as too curious, who " were for having his own ſentiments. In purſuance of " his deſign, ha brings in Stoics, Epicureans, Platoniſts, " Academics, New and Old, in order to inſtruct the " Romans in their various opinions, and ſeveral ways of " reaſoning. But whether it be himſelf or others that " are brought upon the ſtage, it is the *Academic* not Ci-" cero; it is the Stoic, the Epicurean, not Balbus, nor " Velleius, who deliver their opinions." See Warburton's Divine Legation, part 2. book 3. laſt edition, where the character of Cicero, as drawn by that very learned and able writer, p. 165, &c. is the beſt clue I know of to guide us through his philoſophical works. See alſo, Critical Inquiry into the Opinions and Practice of the ancient philoſophers, paſſim.

[1] Οἱ τὰ κοινὰ χειρίζοντες παρὰ μὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, ἐαν τάλαντον μόνον πιστευθῶσιν ἀντιγραφεῖς ἔχοιλη δέκα, ἢ Ζφραγίδας τοσαύτας, ἢ μάρτυρας διπλασίους, ἃ δυνάνται τηρεῖν τὴν πίστιν. παρὰ δὲ Ρωμαίοις, κατὰ τὲ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἢ πρεσβείας, πολὺ τὶ πλῆθος χρημάτων χειρίζοιλες δι' αὐτῆς τῆς κατὰ τὸν ὅρκον πίστεως, τηροῦσι τὸ καθῆκον. Polyb. lib. 6. p. 693.

I have called ἀντιγραφεῖς, Notary-publick, becauſe that office anſwers the idea much better, in my opinion, than *Contrarotulator*, from which may poſſibly be derived our Comptroller, which, I think, is by no means what is here meant.

but

but a ſingle talent to a Greek, who has been uſed to finger the publick money, and though you have the ſecurity of ten counterparts, drawn up by as many publick notaries, backed by as many ſeals, and the teſtimony of twice as many witneſſes, yet, with all theſe precautions, you cannot poſſibly prevent him from proving a rogue. Whilſt the Romans, who, by their various offices, are intruſted with large ſums of the publick money, pay ſo conſcientious a regard to the religion of their office-oath, that they were never known to violate their faith, though reſtrained only by that ſingle tye. How greatly they deviated from this rectitude of manners, after theſe infidel tenets had taken root amongſt them, we may learn from Cicero, in his orations and epiſtles. Salluſt too will inform us, how extremely common the crime of perjury was grown, in that ſevere reproach, which Lucius Philippus, a Patrician, makes to Lepidus, the Conſul, before the whole Senate, [1] That he neither ſtood in awe of men or Gods, whom he had ſo frequently injured, and defied by his villanies and perjuries.

[2] Polybius gives it as his real opinion, that

[1] Te neque hominum neque Deorum pudet, quos perfidia & perjurio violâſti. Sall. Fragm. Orat. L. Phil. Cont. Lep. p. 146.

[2] Μεγίστην δὲ μοι δοκεῖ διαφορὰν ἔχειν τὸ Ρωμαίων πολίτευμα πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον ἐν τῇ περὶ θεῶν διαλήψει· κ᾽ μοὶ δοκεῖ τὸ παρὰ τοῖς

nothing ſhews the ſuperior excellence of the civil Goverument of the Romans to that of other people, ſo much as thoſe religious ſentiments with reſpect to their Gods, which they conſtantly inculcated and ſupported. He affirms too his real ſentiments to be, that the chief ſupport and preſervation of the Roman Republick aroſe from that awful fear of the Gods, which was ſo much ridiculed and exploded by the Grecians. I have taken the liberty to render τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις, [1] the Greçians, who are evidently pointed at in

τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις ὀνειδιζομενον, τῦτο ζυνέχειν τὰ Ρωμαίων πράγματα· λέγω δὲ την δεισιδαιμονίαν. Polyb. lib. 6. p. 692.

[1] There is indeed little occaſion for an apology for this tranſlation. The judicious critick will eaſily ſee, that in this paſſage there is a plain contraſt drawn between the manners of the Grecians and the Romans in the time of Polybius. The cauſe of that difference this able writer juſtly aſcribes to that δεισιδαιμονία, or awful fear of the Gods, ſo ſtrongly inculcated amongſt the Romans, and ſo much deſpiſed and ridiculed amongſt the Grecians, who were at that time greatly tinctured with the Atheiſm of Epicurus. The inſtance he ſelects in proof, drawn from the very different effect of an oath upon the manners of thoſe two people, muſt convince us beyond a doubt, that by the words τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις ὀνειδιζομενον, he plainly characteriſes his own countrymen. As by "οἱ νῦν εἰκῆ καὶ ἀλόγως ἐκβάλλειν αὐτὰ," they who now (that is, in his time) inconſiderately and abſurdly reject thoſe great ſanctions of religion, he evidently points at ſuch of the leading men amongſt the Romans, as in his time had embraced the pernicious tenets of Epicurus. For though he had ſtigmatized the Cartha-

in this paſſage. For ſo juſt and accurate a writer as Polybius could not be ignorant, that the Grecians were the only people in the world at that time, who had been debauched into Atheiſm by the pernicious tenets of Epicurus. Polybius firmly believed the exiſtence of a Deity, and the interpoſition of a divine ſuperintending Providence, though he was an enemy to ſuperſtition. [1] Yet when he obſerved the good effects produced amongſt the Romans by their religion, though carried even to the higheſt poſſible degree of ſuperſtition, and the remarkable influence it had upon their manners in private life, as well as upon their publick councils, he concludes it

Carthaginians immediately before for their avarice and luſt of gain, yet no man knew better than Polybius, that the Carthaginians rather exceeded the Romans in ſuperſtition. That they were ſincere too in their belief, is evident from that moſt horrible method, by which they expreſſed their δεισιδαιμονία, which was their frequent ſacrifices of great numbers of their own children (thoſe of the very firſt families not excepted) to their God Moloch, who, by the Greeks and Romans, was termed Chronos and Saturn.

I thought this remark might not be unuſeful, becauſe as none of the Commentators have taken any notice of it, ſo neither Caſaubon, nor any tranſlator I have yet met with, ſeems to have given me the true ſpirit and meaning of this remarkable paſſage.

[1] Ἐπὶ τοσοῦτοι γὰρ ἐκλέλειπται καὶ παρεισῆκται τοῦτο τὸ μέρος παρ' αὐτοῖς εἴς τε τὰς κατ' ἰδίαν βίους, καὶ τὰ κοινὰ τῆς πόλεως, ὥστε μὴ καλαλιπεῖν ὑπερβόλην. Ibid.

to be [1] the reſult of a wiſe and conſummate policy in the ancient Legiſlators. He therefore very juſtly cenſures thoſe as wrong-headed, and wretchedly bungling politicians, who at that time endeavoured to eradicate the fear of an after-reckoning, and the terrors of a hell, out of the minds of a people. Yet how few years ago did we ſee this miſerably miſtaken policy prevail in our own country, during the whole adminiſtration of ſome late power-engroſſing miniſters. Compelled at all events to ſecure a majority in Parliament to ſupport themſelves againſt the efforts of oppoſition, they found the greateſt obſtacle to their ſchemes ariſe from thoſe principles of religion, which yet remained amongſt the people. For though a great number of the electors were not at all averſe to the bribe, yet their conſciences were too tender to digeſt perjury. To remove this troubleſome teſt at elections, which is one of the bulwarks of our conſtitution, would be impracticable. To weaken or deſtroy thoſe principles, upon which the oath was founded, and from which it derived its force and obligation, would equally anſwer the purpoſe, and de-

[1] Διόπερ οἱ παλαιοὶ δοκιμοι τὰς περὶ θεῶν ἐννοίας, καὶ τὰς περὶ τῶν ἐν ᾅδου διαλήψεις ἐκ εἰκῆ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν εἰς τὰ πλήθη παρεισαγαγεῖν. πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον οἱ νῦν εἰκῆ καὶ ἀλόγως ἐκβάλλειν αὐτά. Lib. 6. p. 693.

ſtroy

ſtroy all publick virtue at the ſame time. The bloody and deep-felt effects of that hypocriſy which prevailed in the time of Cromwell, had driven great numbers of the ſufferers into the contrary extreme. When therefore ſo great a part of the nation was already prejudiced againſt whatever carried the appearance of a ſtricter piety, it is no wonder that ſhallow ſuperficial reaſoners, who have not Logic enough to diſtinguiſh between the uſe and abuſe of a thing, ſhould readily embrace thoſe Atheiſtical tenets, which were imported, and took root in the voluptuous and thoughtleſs reign of Charles the Second. But that ſolid learning, which revived after the Reſtoration, eaſily baffled the efforts of open and avowed Atheiſm, which from that time has taken ſhelter under the leſs obnoxious name of Deiſm. For the principles of modern Deiſm, when ſtript of that diſguiſe which has been artfully thrown over them, to deceive thoſe who hate the fatigue of thinking, and are ever ready to admit any concluſion in argument, which is agreeable to their paſſions, without examining the premiſes, are in reality the ſame with thoſe of Epicurus, as tranſmitted to us by Lucretius. The influence therefore, which they had upon the manners of the Greeks and Romans, will readily account for thoſe effects which we experience from them in our

our own country, where they ſo fatally prevail. To patronize and propagate theſe principles, was the beſt expedient which the narrow ſelfiſh policy of thoſe miniſters could ſuggeſt. For their greateſt extent of genius never reached higher, than a fertility in temporary ſhifts and expedients, to ſtave off the evil day of national account, which they ſo much dreaded. They were ſenſible that the wealth and luxury, which are the general effects of an extenſive trade in a ſtate of profound peace, had already greatly hurt the morals of the people, and ſmoothed the way for their grand ſyſtem of corruption. Far from checking this licentious ſpirit of luxury and diſſipation, they left it to its full and natural effects upon the manners, whilſt, in order to corrupt the principles of the people, they retained, at the publick expence, a venal ſet of the moſt ſhameleſs miſcreants that ever abuſed the liberty of the preſs, or inſulted the religion of their country. To the adminiſtration of ſuch miniſters, which may juſtly be termed the grand æra of corruption, we owe that fatal ſyſtem of bribery, which has ſo greatly affected the morals of the electors in almoſt every borough in the kingdom. To that too we may juſtly attribute the preſent contempt and diſregard of the ſacred obligation of an oath, which is the ſtrongeſt bond of ſociety, and the beſt ſecurity and ſupport of civil government.

I have

I have now, I hope, ſatisfactorily accounted for that rapid and unexampled degeneracy of the Romans, which brought on the total ſubverſion of that mighty Republick. The cauſe of this ſudden and violent change of the Roman manners, has been juſt hinted at by the ſagacious Monteſquieu, but, to my great ſurprize, has not been duly attended to by any one hiſtorian [1] I have yet met with. I have ſhewed too, how the ſame cauſe has been working the ſame effects in our own nation, as it invariably will in every country where thoſe fatally deſtructive principles are admitted. As the real end of all hiſtory is inſtruction, I have held up a juſt portrait of the Roman manners, in the times immediately preceding the loſs of their liberty, to the inſpection of my countrymen, that they may guard in time againſt thoſe calamities,

[1] I have been favoured with the following remark upon this paſſage.——"I have lately met with an obſcure "book, entitled, Chriſtian Morals, and Chriſtian Pru- "dence, by *John Lawrence*, M.A. rector of *Yelvertoft*, "*Northamptonſhire*, printed for *Knapton*, 1717, in which "are theſe words:——But as ſoon as Epicurus and his "followers began to weaken the foundation principles "of religion, by calling them in queſtion, all manner of "immorality came rolling in like a mighty torrent, and "threw down the banks of law and ſobriety." The book indeed I never heard of before, and as I have not the honour to know the gentleman who ſent me the remark, I take this opportunity of returning him thanks for his very obliging letter.

which

which will be the inevitable conſequence of the like degeneracy. The unpromiſing aſpect of our affairs, at the time of the ſudden and unexpected alliance between the houſes of Bourbon and Auſtria, gave the firſt riſe to theſe reflections. But as the intereſts and ſituation of this kingdom, with reſpect to France, are ſo greatly analogous to thoſe of Carthage with reſpect to Rome, I ſhall proceed to compare the different manners, policy, and military conduct of thoſe two rival nations. By thus comparing the different policy of theſe warlike people, whoſe views and intereſts were as diametrically oppoſite, and as irreconcileable as thoſe of Great Britain and France, we may learn the ſuperior advantages which each enjoyed, and the different diſadvantages ariſing from their different policy, which each people laboured under, during their long and inveterate conteſts. The reſult, which I moſt ſincerely wiſh from this inquiry, is, that we may avoid thoſe egregious blunders on the ſide of the Romans, which reduced them to the very brink of ruin, and thoſe more capital defects on the part of the Carthaginians, which terminated in the utter deſtruction of their very being as a people.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

CARTHAGINIANS and ROMANS compared.

THE origin of both theſe people ſeems alike to have been extremely low. Romulus, according to Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, could form no more than three thouſand foot and three hundred horſe out of his whole people, where every individual was obliged to be a ſoldier. The Tyrians, who accompanied Dido in her flight from her brother Pygmalion, could be but few in number from the very circumſtances of their eſcape from an avaritious and vigilant Tyrant.

Romulus, to ſupply this defect, not only opened an aſylum for all fugitives, whom he admitted as ſubjects, but in all his conqueſts over the neighbouring States, annexed the lands to his own ſmall territory, and incorporated the priſoners amongſt his own Roman citizens. By this maſterly policy, notwithſtanding the number of men he muſt neceſſarily have loſt during a warlike reign of thirty-ſeven years, he left at his death, according to Dionyſius, forty-five thouſand foot and a thouſand horſe. As the ſame policy

policy was purſued under the Republican as under the regal government, the Romans, though involved in continual wars, found themſelves not inferior in number even to thoſe nations, who were reputed the moſt populous. Dionyſius, from whom I have taken this account, extols the policy of the Romans in this point as greatly ſuperior to that of the Grecians. The Spartans, ſays that judicious hiſtorian, were obliged to give up their dominion over Greece by their ſingle defeat at Leuctra; as the loſs of the battle of Chæronea reduced the Thebans and Athenians to the ſad neceſſity of yielding up the government of Greece, as well as their liberty, to the Macedonians. Theſe misfortunes Dionyſius imputes to the miſtaken policy of the Grecians, who were, in general, unwilling to communicate the privileges of their reſpective States to foreigners. Whereas the Romans, who admitted even their enemies to the rights of citizenſhip, derived additional ſtrength even from their misfortunes. And he affirms, that after the terrible defeat at Cannæ, where out of eighty-ſix thouſand little more than three thouſand three hundred and ſeventy men eſcaped, the Romans owed the preſervation of their State, not to the benevolence of fortune, as ſome, he ſays, imagine, but to the number of their diſciplined Militia, which enabled

enabled them to encounter every danger. I am ſenſible that the remarks of Dionyſius, which have been adopted by many of our modern writers, are extremely juſt in relation to the Thebans and Athenians. Becauſe as the former of theſe people endeavoured to extend their dominions by arms, the latter both by arms and commerce, both States ought, like the Romans, to have attracted as many foreigners as poſſibly they could, to enable them to execute plans which require an inexhauſtible ſupply of people. But the excluſion of foreigners ought not, in my opinion, to be cenſured as a defect in the Spartan conſtitution. Becauſe it is evident, from the teſtimony of Polybius and Plutarch, that the great end which Lycurgus propoſed by his laws, was not to increaſe the wealth and power of his countrymen, but to preſerve the purity of their manners: as his military regulations, according to the ſame authors, were not calculated for making conqueſts and ſerving the purpoſes of ambition, but for the defence and ſecurity of his Republick. I obſerve too, in proof of my opinion, that the Spartans gradually loſt their virtue, and afterwards their liberty, only ſo far as they deviated from the inſtitutions of their legiſlator——But I return from the digreſſion into which this ſubject unavoidably led me.

In

In our reſearches back into the remote times of antiquity, we muſt lay hold of whatever helps we are able to meet with. If [1] Juſtin therefore is to be credited, Dido not only received conſiderable aſſiſtance from a colony of Tyrians which ſhe found ſettled in Utica, but admitted great numbers of the natives who ſettled with her in the new city, and conſequently became Carthaginians. I may add too, in proof of this account, that unleſs the Carthaginians had long purſued this wiſe policy, it is ſcarce poſſible, by the courſe of nature, that the Tyrians alone could have multiplied by propagation to ſo prodigious a degree, as to be able to furniſh men ſufficient to raiſe and carry on that extenſive commerce, and plant thoſe numerous colonies which we meet with in the earlier ages of their hiſtory.

As to their conſtitution, Rome and Carthage were both Republicks, both free, and their form of Government nearly ſimilar, as far as we can collect from hiſtory. Two [2] Supreme Magiſtrates, annually elected, the Senate, and the people, formed the body politick in each Republick. The annual elections of their chief magiſtrates, were a per-

[1] Juſtin. lib. 18. c. 5.

[2] Termed conſuls by the Romans, *Sufetes* by the Carthaginians.

manent

manent ſource of diviſion and faction alike in both; a defect which Lycurgus guarded againſt in the Spartan government, where the chief magiſtracy was perpetual and hereditary. The Senate in both nations was compoſed out of the moſt reſpectable and greateſt men in each Republick. At Rome the Conſuls choſe the Senators with the approbation of the people, but at laſt the Cenſors arrogated that power to themſelves. At Carthage, as Ariſtotle informs us, the Senators were elected; but as he has no where told us who were the electors, it is moſt probable, that the right of election was the inherent privilege of the people, ſince he cenſures that Republick as too much leaning towards Democracy. At Rome, in the virtuous times of that Republick, birth and merit alone intitled the poſſeſſor to a place in the Senate, as well as the chief offices in the State. At Carthage, though birth and merit ſeem to have been qualifications indiſpenſably neceſſary, yet [1] even theſe could not ſucceed, unleſs the candidate was at the ſame time maſter of ſuch a fortune as would enable him to ſupport his dignity with [2] luſ-

[1] Οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἀριστίνδην, ἀλλὰ καὶ πλουτίνδην οἴονται δεῖν αἱμεῖσθαι τὰς ἀρχούλας. Ariſt. de Repub. lib. 2. p. 334. c. 11.

[2] Αἱρεῖσθαι γὰρ εἰς δύο ταῦτα βλέπουσες (τὴν πλοῦτον, ſcil. καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν) καὶ μάλιστα τὰς μεγίστας, τὰς τε Βασιλείας καὶ τὰς στρατηγίας. Ibid. p. 335.

tre. This Ariſtotle cenſures as a defect. For he looks upon all that merit, which was unſupported by the proper proportion of wealth, as ſo much loſt to the Carthaginians; and he lays down that maxim in their Government, as the real cauſe of that undue reſpect for wealth, and that luſt of gain, which prevailed ſo much in that Republick. But the ſentiments of this philoſopher, like thoſe of his maſter Plato, are, I fear, too ideal to be reduced to practice. For he does not ſeem to attend to the different genius of different nations, but aims at adjuſting the balance of power in his Republick by the nice ſtandard of philoſophick theory. The genius of nations differs perhaps as much as their climate and ſituation, which ſeem (at leaſt in ſome degree) to be the natural cauſe of that difference. The Republicks of Sparta and Rome were both military, and military glory ſtamped the primary character of both theſe people. The Republick of Carthage, like that of their anceſtors, the Tyrians, was commercial. Hence the luſt of gain marked their ruling character. Their military character aroſe from the neceſſity of defending that wealth which their commerce had acquired. Hence military glory was but a ſecondary paſſion, and generally ſubſervient to their luſt of gain. Unleſs we attend to the different ruling paſſion, which forms the different

ferent character of each Republick, we ſhall never be able to make ſuch a compariſon as will do equal juſtice to each people. At Sparta and Rome wealth was deſpiſed, when put in competition with honour, and poverty joined with merit formed the moſt eſtimable of all characters. Quite different maxims prevailed at Carthage. Wealth with them was the chief ſupport of merit, and nothing was ſo contemptible as poverty. Hence the Carthaginians, who were well acquainted with the power and influence of wealth, required the additional qualification of an ample fortune in all candidates for the ſenatorial dignity, and publick employments. For they judged that ſuch men would be leſs expoſed to the temptations of corruption, and at the ſame time more anxious for the welfare of a State in which they were ſo deeply intereſted by their private property. That this was the real ſtate of the caſe, at Carthage, notwithſtanding the ſuggeſtions of Ariſtotle and the Greek and Roman hiſtorians, may, I think, be fairly proved from the behaviour of their Senate and the choice of their officers, which ought certainly to be admitted as the beſt evidence. For we conſtantly find all their publick employments filled up with men of the greateſt families, and, unleſs when the intrigues of faction ſometimes prevailed, of the greateſt abilities.

We find in general the ſame firm and ſteady attachment to the ſervice of their country, and the ſame indefatigable zeal for extending the territories and power of their Republick. Nor does the moſt partial hiſtorian charge any one of them with ſacrificing the honour and intereſt of his country to any foreign power for money: a practice which was ſhamefully common amongſt the Roman Generals in the time of Jugurtha. Hence we may, I think, aſſign the true reaſon, why the greateſt families in Carthage, as we are informed by hiſtorians, thought it no way derogatory to their honour to engage in commerce. For as this is moſt probably to be underſtood of the younger ſons of their nobility, the true motive ſeems to ariſe, not from avarice, as their enemies object, but from a view of raiſing ſuch a fortune, as might qualify them for admiſſion into the Senate, or any of the great employments. Hence too it is evident, that a regulation which might be highly uſeful and ſalutary, in an opulent commercial Republick, would be greatly injurious to ſuch military Republicks as Rome and Sparta, by corrupting their manners. We need no other proof than the fate of thoſe two Republicks, who both owed their ruin to the introduction of that wealth, which was unknown to their virtuous anceſtors. The Carthaginian Senate ſeems to have been much more numerous

numerous than the Roman. [1] For at Carthage there was a ſelect ſtanding committee eſtabliſhed, of one hundred and four of the moſt reſpectable members, to keep a watchful eye over the great families, and repreſs any attempts which their ambition might make to ſubvert the conſtitution. To this committee all their commanding officers by ſea and land, without exception, were obliged to give a ſtrict account of their conduct at the end of every campaign. We may therefore properly term it the Carthaginian court-martial. Out of this venerable body another ſelect committee was formed of five members only, who were moſt conſpicuous for their probity, ability, and experience. [2] Theſe ſerved without fee or ſalary; as glory, and the love of their country, were eſteemed motives ſufficient to engage men of their ſuperior rank, and character, to ſerve the publick with zeal and fidelity. For which reaſon they were not choſen by lot, but elected by merit. Their power was very

[1] Ἔχει δὲ πολίτεία τῶν Καρχηδωνίων παραπλήσια τῇ Λακωνικῇ πολιτείᾳ τὰ μὲν ζυσσίτια τῶν ἑταιρῶν τοῖς φιδιτίοις· τὴν δὲ τῶν ἑκαὸν καὶ τετλάρων ἀρχὴν, τοῖς Ἐφόροις, πλὴν ὐ χεῖρον. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τῶν τυχόντων εἰσὶ. Ταύτην δ' αἱρεῖσθαι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀριστίνδην. Ibid. p. 334.

[2] —Τὸ δ' ἀμίσθους καὶ μὴ κληρωτὰς ἀριστοκρατικὸν θετέον, καὶ εἴτι τοιοῦτον ἕτερον. Ibid.

extenſive. [1] Their office was for life, and they filled up any vacancy in their own body, out of the one hundred and four, and all vacancies in that grand committee, out of the reſt of the Senate, by their own authority, and at their own diſcretion. They were the ſupreme judges, beſides, in all cauſes whatſoever without appeal. The inſtitution of this grand committee, in my opinion, exceeded every thing in the Roman policy. [2] For it preſerved their State from all thoſe violent concuſſions, which ſo frequently ſhook, and at laſt totally ſubverted the Roman Republick. But the power of the committee of five was exorbitant, and dangerous to the lives and fortunes of their fellow-citizens. The proof is from fact. For at the concluſion of the ſecond Punick war, they had made ſo arbitrary an uſe of their power, and were grown ſo odious to the people, that the great Hannibal regulated that amongſt other abuſes, and procured a

[1]—Τὸ δὲ τὰς πενταρχίας κυρίας ἔσας πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων, ὑφ' αὐτῶν αἱρεῖσθαι εἶναι, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἑκατὸν ταύτας αἱρεῖσθαι τὴν μεγίστην ἀρχήν. ἔτι δὲ ταύτας πλείονα ἄρχειν χρόνον τῶν ἄλλων (καὶ γὰρ ἐξελήλυθότες ἄρχουσι, καὶ μέλλοντες) ὀλιγαρχικόν. Ibid.

[2]—Σημεῖον δὲ πολιτείας συντεταγμένης, τὸ τὸν δῆμον ἔχουσαν, διαμένειν ἐν τῇ τάξει τῆς πολιτείας, καὶ μηδεμίαν, ὅτι γὰρ ἄξιον εἰπεῖν, γενέσθαι, μήτε Τύραννον. Ibid.

law,

law, which made that office annual and elective, with a clauſe forbidding any future alteration. Whether the Carthaginian Senators enjoyed their ſeats for life, or whether they were liable to be expelled for any miſdemeanour, and by whom, are points in which hiſtory is quite ſilent. At Rome, as the cenſors had the power of promoting to that dignity, ſo they had equally the power of expelling any member for bad manners, by the ſingle ceremony of leaving out his name when they called over the liſt of the Senate. I cannot help thinking this a great defect in the Roman polity: ſince it threw the power of garbling and modelling the Senate into the hands of two men, who were liable to be corrupted to ſerve the ends of faction. A power which ought never to be lodged in ſo few hands in a country which enjoys the bleſſings of liberty. For how ſerviceable ſoever it might have been, as a curb to licentiouſneſs in the earlier ages of that Republick; yet Cicero, in his Oration for A. Cluentius, inveighs bitterly againſt the abuſe of the cenſorial power in his time, and gives ſeveral inſtances where it was made ſubſervient to the ends of faction in modelling the Senate. And he ſeems to fear that the cenſors liſt may bring as many calamities upon the citizens as the late moſt inhuman proſcription; and that the point of the cen-

ſors pen may prove as terrible as the ſword of their late Dictator. C. Nepos, in the life of Hamilcar, takes notice of an officer of the ſame nature amongſt the Carthaginians, to whoſe inſpection the greateſt men in that Republick ſeem to have been ſubject. But it does not appear from hiſtory, whether his power extended ſo far as to expel a Senator. Should a bad prince, or a wicked miniſter, ever be inveſted with the power of weeding the houſe, and modelling a parliament at pleaſure, there would be an end of our conſtitution and liberty.

In the Roman Senate all queſtions were decided (as in our parliament) by a majority of voices. At Carthage no law could paſs, unleſs the Senate were unanimous, like the Poliſh diet. One ſingle Veto from any one member, took the queſtion out of the hands of the Senate, and gave up the ultimate deciſion to the people, who were the *dernier reſſort* of all power. This [1] Ariſtotle cenſures as inclining more towards Democracy

[1] Τὸ μὲν, προσάγειν, τὸ δὲ μὴ προσάγειν πρὸς τὸν δῆμον, οἱ Βασιλεῖς κύριοι μετὰ τῶν γερόντων, ἂν ὁμογνωμονῶσι πάντες. εἰ δὲ μὴ, καὶ τούτων ὁ δῆμος. Ἃ δὲ ἂν εἰσφέρωσιν ἔτοι ὁ διακῦσαι μόνον ἀποδιδόασι τῷ δήμῳ τὰ δόξαντα τοῖς ἄρχουσιν, ἀλλὰ κύριοι κρῖνειν εἰσὶ καὶ τῶν βουλομένων τοῖς εἰσφερομένοις ἀντειπεῖν ἔξεστιν. Ὅπερ ἐν ταῖς ἑτέραις πολιτείαις οὐκ ἔστι. Ibid. pag. 334.

than

than was conſiſtent with the juſt rules of a well regulated Republick. Becauſe the magiſtrates were not only obliged to open all the different opinions and debates of the Senators upon the queſtion, in the hearing of the people, who were the abſolute and deciſive judges in all theſe caſes of appeal; but any one, even the loweſt fellow in the mob, might freely give his opinion in oppoſition juſt as he thought proper. A ſource of endleſs diſcord, anarchy, and confuſion! A kind of polity, as Ariſtotle obſerves, unknown in any other form of Republican government.

In this point, I think the Roman polity far preferable to the Carthaginian, except in thoſe abuſes of the tribunitial power, which ſo frequently happened towards the decline of that Republick. But when any one turbulent, ſeditious tribune, inſtigated by ambition, or corrupted by a faction (which in thoſe times was generally the caſe) could by his ſingle Veto, ſtop all proceedings of the Senate, and haul the caſe before the people; nay, when he could drag the ſupreme magiſtrates, the Conſuls themſelves, to priſon, by his ſole authority, and could commit the moſt outrageous, and moſt ſhameful acts of licentiouſneſs with impunity, becauſe their office rendered their perſons ſacred by law, I eſteem the Carthaginian polity infinitely more

more eligible. For that fear and jealouſy of ceding any part of their authority, which is ſo natural to men in power, would always be a ſtrong motive to union in a Carthaginian Senate; becauſe it would naturally induce any member, rather to give up his private opinion, than ſuffer an eſſential part of their power to devolve to the people. But the Roman tribunitial power, which was in conſtant oppoſition to the Senatorial, drew at laſt by much too great a weight into the Democratick ſcale, and in the laſt period of their liberty was a principal leading cauſe of the ruin of that Republick. For as the Senate was unſupported by a third power, ſo eſſentially requiſite to preſerve the balance of government in its due æquipoiſe, the Tribunes perpetually fomented and kept up thoſe terrible feuds, which brought on Anarchy, and terminated in abſolute inſupportable Tyranny.

The condition of the Roman populace before the erection of the tribunitial power, ſeems, in my judgment, to have been little better than that ſtate of vaſſalage, which the peaſants groan under in Poland. The relation between Patron and Client amongſt the Romans, ſeems to be ſomething analogous to the relation between Lord and Vaſſal, with this difference, that the Client had the free choice of his patron, which the

Vaſſal

Vaſſal has not with reſpect to the Lord. At leaſt it is certain, if we may credit the Roman hiſtorians, that their people were ſubject to equal, if not greater exactions and oppreſſions from the Patricians. How heavy theſe were, we may learn from the numerous mutinies, inſurrections, and that great ſeceſſion, which compelled the Patricians to create the tribunitial office in their favour. This new office occaſioned a great revolution in their new government, and produced thoſe perpetual conflicts between the Ariſtocratick and Democratick powers, which fill the hiſtory of that Republick. The Patricians had recourſe frequently to their only reſource, a Dictator with abſolute power, to defend them from the inſolence of the Tribunes. But this was only a temporary expedient. The people renewed their attacks, 'till they had aboliſhed the diſtinct prerogatives ariſing from birth and family, and laid open all honours, even the Conſulſhip, and Dictatorſhip, the ſupreme magiſtracy of all, to the free admiſſion of their own body. The people were highly elated with theſe repeated victories, as they imagined them, over their old enemies the Patricians; but they were quickly ſenſible, that in fact, they were only the dupes of their ambitious leaders. The moſt opulent and powerful of the Plebeians, by ſerving the high offices of the

the State, acquired the title of Nobles, in contradiſtinction to thoſe, who were deſcended from the Patrician families, who ſtill retained their ancient appellation. Theſe new Nobles, many of whom had crept into the Senate, ſided conſtantly with the Patricians in all diſputes and conteſts with their former friends, the people, and were generally their greateſt enemies. The Patricians, ſtrengthened by this new acquiſition of power, were frequently too hard for the Tribunes. In thoſe memorable conteſts with the two Gracchi, who endeavoured in their Tribuneſhip to revive the Agrarian law (calculated to divide the conquered lands among the poor citizens) the diſpute ſeems to have lain wholly between the rich and the poor: for the Nobles and rich Plebeians were as unwilling to part with their land, as the Patricians. This ſtrengthened the Patricians ſo much, that they were able in each of thoſe conteſts, to quell the efforts of the people by force, and quaſh the whole affair by the death of both the Gracchi.

It has been a general remark of moſt writers, both ancient and modern, that the Roman Republick owed its preſervation to the firmneſs and wiſdom of the Senate, and the ſubordinate obedience of the people: and that the Republick of Carthage muſt aſcribe its ruin to that aſcendency, which the people

people had uſurped over the authority of the Senate. The reverſe of this ſeems to be the truth. We meet with but one inſtance in hiſtory, where the power of the Carthaginian people over-ruled the authority of their Senate, ſo far as to compel them to act contrary to their opinion. This was that ſhameful violation of the law of nations in ſeizing the tranſports which were bringing neceſſaries to Scipio's camp, during the truce he had granted that they might ſend ambaſſadors to Rome to negotiate a peace with the Roman Senate. For though they threatened violence to the Senate, if they ſubmitted to thoſe hard terms which were impoſed by Scipio after the defeat at Zama; yet they were eaſily reduced to obedience by Hannibal, and reſigned the whole affair to the deciſion of the Senate. The Roman hiſtory, on the contrary, is one continued detail of animoſities, and frequently moſt bloody conteſts, between the Senate and the people in their perpetual ſtruggles for power. And the frequent elections of that low Plebeian Marius to the conſular dignity, in oppoſition to the Patricians, the malignant effects of the overbearing power of the people, opened that ſcene of blood and anarchy, which ended only in the utter ſubverſion of their liberty and conſtitution.

The

The judicious Monteſquieu obſerves, " that the Carthaginians grew rich much " ſooner than the Romans, and conſequent- " ly ſunk much ſooner into corruption." He adds too; " that whilſt merit alone en- " titled the poſſeſſor to the great employ- " ments at Rome, every thing which the " public at Carthage had the power of " beſtowing, was venal."——The former part of this aſſertion is too general to be admitted without proper reſtrictions, the latter is a plain tranſcript from Polybius. The Carthaginians muſt have been rich ſeveral ages before the Romans. For both Herodotus and Thucydides, (who was but thirteen years younger) take notice of them as a very formidable maritime power, a circumſtance which could only ariſe from their naval genius and extenſive commerce. Yet we find no inſtance of their being corrupt, 'till the concluſion of the ſecond Punick war, when Hannibal reformed thoſe ſhameful abuſes, which had crept into the management of the publick revenue, and reſtrained that power which the committee of five had uſurped over the lives and fortunes of their fellow-citizens. As for the quotation out of Polybius, whoſe country was at that time a province to the Romans, with whom he reſided only as a ſtate priſoner; I eſteem it as no more than a compliment to the Roman vanity at the

the expence of the Carthaginians, whoſe very name was odious to that people. Or very probably he might bring that charge againſt the Carthaginians, as a hint to ſhew the conſequences of the ſame ſpecies of corruption, which even in his time, had found entrance amongſt the Romans.

As to religion, both nations were equally ſuperſtitious. If many of the religious ceremonies amongſt the Romans were abſurd and childiſh, it muſt be owned that the Carthaginian worſhip, like that of their anceſtors the Canaanites, from whom they received it, [1] was truly diabolical. But it is by no means candid to judge of the natural bent and temper of a people, from effects produced in their minds by ſuperſtition. For the ſame ſuperſtition which enjoins ſuch horrid rites, will naturally place the chief efficacy of the ſacrifice in the zeal and ſincerity of the offerer. Conſequently, the higheſt degree of merit in ſuch oblations, will conſiſt in ſtifling every human affection, and over-ruling nature. Thus in the Carthaginian idolatry, the ſofter ſex, as more ſuſceptible of tenderneſs for their offspring,

[1] The idol to whom the Carthaginians ſacrificed their children was the Moloch of the Canaanites, from whom they were lineally deſcended. This idol was the Chronos of the Greeks, and Saturn of the Latines.

were

were required to attend in perſon. [1] They were even compelled, upon this dreadful occaſion, to affect all the joy and chearfulneſs of feſtivity, becauſe, as Plutarch informs us, if a ſigh or a tear eſcaped them, the merit of the offering would be abſolutely loſt, and themſelves liable to a fine. That the Carthaginians were no more void of parental affection than other nations, is evident from that pious [2] fraud they had ſo long practiſed, of ſecretly buying up poor children, whom they ſubſtituted as victims to their bloody deity inſtead of their own. But after a great defeat which they received from Agathocles, they attributed their ill fortune to the reſentment of their God for their repeated ſacrilege. They [3] ſacrificed two hundred children of the firſt families in Carthage, and three hundred other perſons offered themſelves as voluntary victims to atone for a crime, to which the higheſt degree of guilt was affixed by their impious religion. The Roman ſuperſtition muſt in general be acquitted of the charge of inhumanity. The only tendency towards it, was in the cuſtom of inhuming alive ſuch of the veſtal virgins,

[1] Plut. de Superſtit. p. 171.

[2] Diodor. Sicul. lib. 20. p. 739.

[3] Id. ibid.

as

as had violated their vow of chaſtity [1]. But the bloody and frequent ſhews of the gladiators, which were the delight of the Romans, [2] fix an indelible blot on the character of a brave people. Hiſtorians in general brand the Carthaginians with cruelty and inhumanity. If the charge is juſt, it muſt be chiefly attributed to that execrable cuſtom of human ſacrifices, which always prevailed amongſt that people. Nor do I in the leaſt doubt, but that ſavage ferocity, which the Romans were ſo guilty of in war, was in a great meaſure owing to thoſe barbarous ſpectacles, where wounds, and murder in cold blood, made the moſt agreeable part of the entertainment.

As to publick virtue or love of their country, the Carthaginians were no way inferior to the Romans. The intrepid behaviour of [3]

[1] This inſtitution has been adopted ſince, by the Greek and Latin churches. The only difference in the puniſhment is, that the ancient veſtals were buried alive, the modern veſtals are immured between four walls.

[2] Polybius informs us, that when the Romans took a city by ſtorm, they not only put all the men to the ſword, but even quartered the dogs, and hewed off the limbs of every other living creature they found in the place.

Πολλάκις ἰδεῖν ἐςιν ἐν ταῖς τῶν Ρωμαίων καλαλήψεσι τῶν πόλεων, ὐ μόνες τὲς ἀνθρώπες πεφονευμένες, ἀλλὰ τὲς κυνας διϊχολομένες, κ᾽ των ἄλλων ζώων μέλη παρακεκομμένα. Polyb. lib. 10. p. 820.

[3] Salluſt. de Bell. Jugurth. p. 226—27.

the Philæni, two Carthaginian brothers, who conſented to be buried alive to inlarge the boundaries of their country, equals the moſt heroic inſtance of that kind of enthuſiaſm, which the Roman ſtory can boaſt of. The fate of Machæus, Bomilcar, Hanno, and others, afford undeniable proof, that neither birth, dignity, nor the greateſt ſervices, could ſcreen that man from the moſt ignominious death, who made the leaſt attempt to ſubvert the liberty of his country. I have before taken notice of the *Punica fides*, or that proverbial want of ſincerity, which has been ſo often objected by the Roman hiſtorians: but I cannot help obſerving with the more impartial Monteſquieu [1], "That "the Romans never made peace with ſin- "cerity and good faith, but always took "care to inſert ſuch conditions as, in the "end, proved the ruin of the people with "whom they treated: that the peace they "granted was no more than a politick ſuſ- "penſion of arms, 'till an opportunity of- "fered of compleating their conqueſts: "that it was their invariable maxim to fo- "ment diviſions among the neighbouring "powers, and by ſiding alternately with "either party, as they found it moſt con- "ducive to their own intereſt, play one

[1] Grandeur des Romains, p. 68, &c.

"againſt

" againſt the other, 'till they had reduced " all equally into Provinces: that they fre- " quently employed the ſubtilty and ambi- " guity of terms in their own language, to " fineſſe and chicane in their treaties." Thus they cheated the Ætolians by the ambiguous phraſe of [1] yielding themſelves up to the faith of the Roman people. The poor Ætolians imagined, that the term implied only alliance. But the Romans ſoon convinced them, that what they meant by it, was abſolute ſubjection. [2] They deſtroyed Carthage under ſanction of the moſt vile equivocation, pretending, " that though they promiſed that deluded people to preſerve their State, they did not mean to grant them their city, which word they had purpoſely omitted." Maxims which the French have ſteadily and too ſucceſsfully purſued, and are ſtill purſuing!——Monteſquieu very judiciouſly obſerves, "—That the Romans were ambitious from the luſt of domination: the Carthaginians from the luſt of gain." This accounts for the different reception which commerce met with in the two nations. At Carthage commerce was eſteemed the moſt honourable of all employments. At Rome

[1] In fidem populi Romani ſeſe dedere. Vide Polyb. Excerpt. Legat. p. 1114, 15.

[2] Ibid. p. 1349, 50.

commerce was held in contempt. It was there looked upon as the proper occupation of ſlaves only, and diſgraceful to a free citizen. Thus the one loved war for the ſake of glory and acquiring dominion; the other looked upon war as a means of acquiring wealth, and extending commerce. The Romans plundered the vanquiſhed enemy to make a parade with their wealth in the triumphal proceſſion. The Carthaginians fleeced not only their enemies, but their tributary Provinces, and oppreſſed their allies, to feed their own private avarice, as well as that of the publick. The oppreſſions of the Carthaginian Generals in Spain loſt them all their allies. The wiſer policy of Scipio attached thoſe allies unalterably to the Romans. The exactions of their rapacious Governors in the African Provinces, was the ſource of perpetual revolts, upon the approach of any invader, from a deſire of changing maſters. When Scipio landed, he was joined by all thoſe Provinces, who looked upon the Romans as their deliverers. As ſoon as luxury had introduced avarice and corruption amongſt the Romans, their Generals and Governors purſued the ſame deſtructive maxims, which was one leading cauſe of the final ruin of both the Weſtern and Eaſtern Empires.

There cannot be a ſtronger proof of a weak or a corrupt adminiſtration, than when in-

indigent and neceſſitous men are appointed to the government of diſtant Provinces, from no other motive than party merit, and with no other view than to raiſe a fortune at the expence of the people. Whether the wretched and defenceleſs condition in which the French found our colonies at the beginning of this war, ought not to be aſcribed chiefly to this cauſe, is a queſtion I ſhall wave at preſent. Becauſe the evils we have already ſuffered from former miſconduct, will, I hope, be now removed, by a total alteration of meaſures under an able and honeſt adminiſtration.

It is remarkable, that not one of the hiſtorians who reproach the Carthaginians with corruption, were ever able to accuſe them of luxury and effeminacy. The Carthaginians, to their immortal honour, ſtand ſingle upon the records of hiſtory, "the only people in the univerſe, upon whom immenſe wealth was never able to work its uſual effects." The Romans, corrupted by wealth, quickly loſt all pretenſions both to publick and private virtue, and from a race of heroes, degenerated into a nation of the moſt abject ſlaves. The Carthaginian virtue was ſo far from degenerating that it ſhone brighter in the laſt period of their hiſtory, than in any of the former. Even the behaviour of their women in that long and brave defence of

their city againſt the whole Roman power, equalled, or rather exceeded that of the Roman matrons in thoſe times, when they were moſt celebrated for publick virtue. When the Romans were maſters of the city, one ſmall part only excepted, and that part actually in flames, the [1] generous wife of Aſdrubal the chief commander, cloſed the ſcene by as deſperate an act of heroick bravery, as can be met with in hiſtory. After ſhe had upbraided her huſband as a coward and a traitor for ſubmitting to Scipio, ſhe declared her determined reſolution of dying free, and not ſurviving the fate of her country. She firſt ſtabbed both her children, and threw them into the flames; then leaped in after their bodies, and buried herſelf in the ruins of Carthage.

The ſententious [2] Monteſquieu remarks, "That when Carthage made war with her opulence againſt the Roman poverty, her great diſadvantage aroſe from what ſhe eſteemed her greateſt ſtrength, and on which ſhe placed her chief dependence. The reaſon, as he judiciouſly obſerves, is evident. Gold and ſilver may be eaſily exhauſted, but publick virtue, conſtancy, and firmneſs of mind, fortitude and poverty, are inexhauſti-

[1] Appian. de Bell. Pun. p. 82.
[2] Grandeur des Romains, p. 34.

ble."

ble." The Carthaginians in their wars employed foreign mercenaries. The Roman armies were compoſed of their own natives. A defeat or two at ſea obſtructed the Carthaginian commerce, and ſtopped the ſpring which ſupplied their publick exchequer. The loſs of a battle in Africa, where their country was quite open, and deſtitute of fortreſſes, and the natives as much ſtrangers to the uſe of arms as our own country people, reduced them to ſubmit to whatever terms the victors thought proper to impoſe. Regulus, in the firſt Punick war, cooped up the Carthaginians in their capital, after he had given them one defeat by ſea, and one by land. The Romans, after receiving four ſucceſſive defeats from Hannibal, the laſt of which was the fatal battle of Cannæ, where they loſt moſt of their beſt officers, and all their veteran troops, would hearken to no terms of accommodation, and even ſent reinforcements to Spain and other places, though Hannibal was at their gates. The reaſon is plain. The citizens of Carthage conſiſted chiefly of unarmed, and undiſciplined tradeſmen. The citizens of Rome, without diſtinction, compoſed a regular body of diſciplined militia.——A ſhort compariſon between the Roman and Carthaginian polity, with reſpect to the military of each people, will eaſily point out to us the true

cauſe which gave the Romans their manifeſt ſuperiority.

I have already taken notice of ſome capital defects of the Carthaginians, both in their marine and military departments. Monteſquieu imputes ſeveral capital errors to the Romans, but he attributes their preſervation after the defeat at Cannæ, when they were at the very brink of ruin, to the force of their inſtitution. He ſeems to place this force in the ſuperior wiſdom and firmneſs of the Roman Senate. A ſhort inquiry into their conduct, during the ſecond Punick war, will ſhew that the cauſe of their preſervation at that time muſt be aſcribed to a very different principle, and that Monteſquieu too haſtily adopted that opinion from the Greek and Roman hiſtorians,

If we examine the boaſted behaviour of the Roman Senate, from the firſt attack of Saguntum to the memorable battle of Cannæ, we ſhall find it to conſiſt of one continued ſeries of blunders, which carry all the marks of weak, factious, and divided counſels. The Romans had certain intelligence of Hannibal's deſign of attacking them in Italy. This was no ſecret in Spain, where every preparation, and every motion of Hannibal's was directed to that point of view. The Romans were certainly jealous of ſuch a deſign, when they ſent ambaſſadors to Hannibal,

bal, to inform him, that if he paſſed the Iberus, and attacked the Saguntines, they ſhould look upon it as a declaration of war. When they had received an evaſive anſwer from Hannibal, they croſſed over to Africa, and made the ſame declaration to the Carthaginian Senate. When Hannibal laid ſiege to Saguntum, did the Romans act up to their formidable declaration, or did they ſend a ſingle man to the aſſiſtance of thoſe faithful allies? Juſt the reverſe: They waſted nine months, the time the ſiege laſted, in uſeleſs debates, and fruitleſs embaſſies. They ſacrificed that faithful and heroick people, together with their own intereſt and character, by their folly and irreſolution. For if they had ſent a powerful army at firſt, they might have ſaved Saguntum, or at leaſt confined the war to Spain, and prevented it from penetrating into their own bowels. After Hannibal had laid Saguntum in aſhes, did the boaſted wiſdom and firmneſs of the Roman Senate

[1] When the Roman ambaſſadors, ſoon after the loſs of Saguntum, ſollicited an alliance with the Volſicani, a people of Spain, that people ſeemed aſtoniſhed at the effrontery of the Romans, and bid them go and ſeek for allies amongſt thoſe nations who had never heard of the deſtruction of Saguntum, which, as they aſſured them, would be a melancholy, and ſtriking warning to the Spaniards how they ever placed any confidence in the good faith and friendſhip of the Romans. Liv. lib. 21. c. 19. p. 144.

ap-

appear in more vigorous or more politick meaſures? They again employed a whole winter in a wiſe embaſſy to Carthage, to juſt as little purpoſe as the former, and gave Hannibal all the time he could wiſh to prepare for his expedition. When Hannibal was on his march for Italy, inſtead of ſhutting up the paſſages of the Alps, which would eaſily have defeated that daring enterprize, they ordered the Conſul Scipio, with his army, to oppoſe his paſſage over the Rhone. The Conſul [1] came juſt time enough to learn, that ſuch dilatory meaſures would never check the progreſs of ſo active and vigilant an enemy, who had already paſſed that river, and was on his march for the Alps. The Conſul immediately reimbarked his troops, and haſtened to meet him in his deſcent from thoſe mountains. But Hannibal was already near the banks of the Po, where the Conſul attacked him, but was defeated and dangerouſly wounded. The Senate, alarmed at Hannibal's paſſage over the Alps, which they had taken no precaution to prevent, ſent in a great fright for the other Conſul Sempronius, with his army, out of Sicily. He arrived, and joined his wounded colleague Scipio, who was an able officer, and having learnt, by experience, how dangerous an enemy they had

[1] Polyb. lib. 3. p. 270, et ſeq.

to

to cope with, adviſed caution and prudence in all their operations. But Sempronius, vain, raſh, and ignorant, was deaf to all ſalutary advice, which he ridiculed as the effect of fear. Hannibal, who never inquired into the number of his enemies, but ſtudied only the foibles of their commanders, directed all his operations upon that principle. He applied therefore to the foible of Sempronius, which he was ſoon maſter of, drew him into a ſnare, and cut off almoſt his whole army. The Senate was dreadfully frighted at this ſecond defeat; but to mend the matter, they ſuffered Flaminius, a man more vain, more headſtrong, and more raſh than Sempronius, to be choſen Conſul, and ſent againſt Hannibal. Flaminius fared much worſe than Sempronius. As he acted upon the ſame principles, he run headlong into the trap laid for him by his artful enemy, and loſt his life together with his whole army. Though this terrible blow threw the Romans into inexpreſſible conſternation, yet it ſeems to have brought them to their ſenſes. For they at laſt created the celebrated Fabius Dictator, who was the only Roman commander capable of oppoſing Hannibal. Yet even here they could not help giving another inſtance of their folly, by forcing Minucius upon him for his general of horſe, a man of the ſame character with Sempronius or Flaminius.

Fabius

Fabius acted upon a quite different plan. He knew the danger and folly of oppoſing new raiſed troops to veterans, fluſhed with repeated victories, and commanded by ſo conſummate a General. He therefore oppoſed art to art, watched every motion of his enemy, and cut off his foragers. Hannibal, whoſe army was compoſed chiefly of ſoldiers of fortune out of different nations, connected to him by no other tye than the hopes of plunder, and their eſteem for his perſonal abilities, was ſenſible, that ſuch a conduct in his enemy would quickly put an end to all his hopes in Italy. He tried therefore every art he was maſter of to bring Fabius to a battle; but the wary Roman convinced him, that he knew his trade too well to deviate from that plan, which alone could ſave his country. Though Hannibal did juſtice to thoſe fine ſtrokes of his antagoniſt, yet they were too delicate for the eyes of the Romans. They were diſguſted at his conduct, becauſe they wanted capacity to underſtand it, and gave credit to the idle boaſts of Minucius, though they had already ſuffered ſo ſeverely by truſting men of his genius. Yet, by the moſt unaccountable folly, they raiſed Minucius to an equality of power with Fabius; and Rome, for the firſt time, ſaw two Dictators veſted with unlimited authority. The wiſer Fabius, though amazed at the ſtu-

ſtupidity of his countrymen, adhered ſteadily to his firſt plan. He gave up half the army to the command of his new colleague, but was determined to preſerve the other moiety at leaſt, upon which ſo much depended. Hannibal was ſenſible, that the Romans could not have done him a more eſſential piece of ſervice, unleſs they had recalled Fabius. He immediately threw out a bait for Minucius, which that raſh, unthinking commander as greedily bit at. He fell into the trap laid for him by the crafty Hannibal; was enveloped by the Carthaginians, and muſt inevitably have periſhed, with all the troops under his command, if Fabius had not flown to his aſſiſtance, repulſed the enemy, and reſcued him from the moſt imminent danger of death or captivity. Though Fabius had been ſo ill uſed by his countrymen in general, and by his colleague Minucius in particular, yet he ſhewed, by this generous action, a greatneſs of ſoul ſuperior to private reſentment, and every ſelfiſh paſſion, which he was always ready to ſacrifice to the publick welfare. Minucius indeed felt the force of the obligation, as well as of his own incapacity: he nobly acknowledged it in the ſtrongeſt terms, and returned to his former poſt and duty to his abler Commander. But this heroick behaviour of Fabius ſeems to have made no more impreſſion upon his countrymen, than his maſ-

maſterly conduct. Two new Conſuls were choſen, to whom he reſigned his authority and army, and retired to Rome neglected and unemployed. The new Conſuls followed the advice of Fabius, and avoided coming to action, which diſtreſſed Hannibal extremely. But the following year exhibits ſuch a maſterpiece of folly and ſtupidity in that Roman Senate, whoſe firmneſs and wiſdom are ſo much boaſted of by hiſtorians, and ſuch infatuation in the body of the Roman people, as would ſeem incredible, if the facts, as handed down to us by their own hiſtorians themſelves, did not prove it beyond a poſſibility of doubt or contradiction. Determined to drive Hannibal out of Italy, and put a ſpeedy end to ſo ruinous a war, they raiſed one of the mightieſt armies they had ever yet brought into the field, and employed in it every officer of note or diſtinction at that time in Rome, the great Fabius alone excepted. This was the laſt ſtake of the Romans, upon which their all was ventured. But where does the boaſted wiſdom of the Senate appear in the management of this affair, which was of the laſt importance? Of the two Conſuls, Paulus Æmilius, the one, was a reſpectable man, and an experienced officer: Terentius Varro, the other, was a fellow of the loweſt extraction, who, by noiſe and impudence had raiſed himſelf to the

the Tribuneſhip, was afterwards made Prætor, and, by the aſſiſtance of one Bebius, his relation, at that time a Tribune of the people, had forced himſelf into the conſular dignity. This wretch, who had but juſt talents ſufficient for a captain of the mob, who had never ſeen an action (nor perhaps an army) in his life, had the impudence to cenſure the conduct of Fabius, and to boaſt in the Senate, that he would immediately drive Hannibal out of Italy. The wiſe Senate were not only ſo weak as to believe, but, in oppoſition to all the remonſtrances of Fabius, even to truſt ſuch an empty coxcomb with an equal ſhare in the command. They even gave the Conſuls orders to fight the enemy without delay, ſo great was their confidence in the gaſconading Varro. Hannibal at that time was ſo greatly diſtreſſed for want of proviſions, that his Spaniſh troops begun to mutiny, and talked openly of revolting to the Romans, and he himſelf had thoughts of retiring into Gaul for his own perſonal ſafety. Æmilius, who endeavoured in every point to follow the advice of Fabius, declined fighting, and was convinced by his intelligence, that Hannibal could not ſubſiſt his troops above ten days longer. But Varro was alike deaf to reaſon or perſuaſion. Debates at laſt run ſo high between the Conſuls, that repeated expreſſes were ſent to the Se-

Senate by Æmilius for freſh orders. Had the Senate acted with that prudence, which has been ſo loudly celebrated by hiſtorians, they would certainly have created Fabius Dictator at that critical juncture, which would have put an end to the differences and authority of the Conſuls. For how could they reaſonably hope for ſucceſs, whilſt the army was commanded by two Generals, veſted with equal power, who differed as widely in opinion as in temper? [1] But their chief view at that

[1] It has been aſked —— for what reaſon? I anſwer, Livy will inform us in the 22d book of his hiſtory. —— "The ſtudied delay of Fabius (who induſtriouſly avoided fighting) which, according to that hiſtorian, gave ſuch juſt cauſe of uneaſineſs to Hannibal, was treated at Rome with the utmoſt contempt by the citizens of every rank both military and civil; particularly after the General of the Horſe Minucius had gained ſome ſlight advantage over Hannibal during his abſence."—— He adds, "that two unlucky incidents concurred to augment the diſpleaſure of the citizens againſt the dictator. One was, the artful behaviour of Hannibal; who waſted all the country around with fire and ſword, the Eſtate of Fabius alone excepted, which he carefully preſerved, in hopes that ſuch a different treatment might be thought the effect of ſome clandeſtine correſpondence between the two Commanders."—The other was, —his ſettling an exchange of priſoners with Hannibal by his own proper authority, and by the ſame cartel which had ſubſiſted between the Roman and Carthaginian Generals in the firſt Punick war. By that it was agreed: that if any priſoners ſhould remain on either ſide, after the exchange of man for man was finiſhed, ſuch priſoners

that time ſeems to have been to mortify Fabius, and to that favourite point they wil-

ſoners ſhould be redeemed at the rate of two pounds and a half of ſilver for each ſoldier. When the exchange was made, 247 Roman priſoners remained to be ranſomed. — But as the Senate heſitated greatly at paſſing a decree for the payment of the ſtipulated ſum, becauſe the Dictator had not conſulted them upon the occaſion; he ſold thoſe very lands which Hannibal had left untouched, and diſcharged the debt due from the publick out of his own private fortune.——Whether theſe were the only reaſons or not, yet they had evidently ſuch an effect upon the Romans, that Fabius ſeems to have been at that time the object of their reſentment, which they never failed to give proofs of upon every occaſion.——Thus when Fabius opened the campaign, his cautious conduct was ſo diſagreeable to the officers as well as ſoldiers, who liſtened wholly to the idle boaſts of Minucius, that if the choice of their commander had depended upon the voices of the military men, Minucius, as Livy affirms, would undoubtedly have been preferred to Fabius. The ſame hiſtorian tells us; that when Fabius returned to Rome to preſide as Dictator at their religious ceremonies, the Tribunes of the people inveighed ſo bitterly againſt him in their publick harangues, that he refrained from coming to their aſſemblies.—— Even what he ſpoke in the Senate met with a very indifferent reception, eſpecially when he extolled the conduct and abilities of Hannibal, and enumerated the repeated defeats they had received for the two laſt years through the raſhneſs and incapacity of their own commanders.——When Fabius returned to the camp, he received a much more mortifying proof of their diſpleaſure. For they raiſed Minucius to an equality with him in the command, an act for which there had been no precedent ſince the firſt erection of the dicta-

fully ſacrificed the publick honour and ſafety. Æmilius at laſt returned to Rome, and laid the whole affair before the Senate. But Varro's party proved the majority, and orders were renewed for fighting, but not immediately. Æmilius ſtill declined fighting, and followed the advice of Fabius; but the alternate command of the two Conſuls, which took place every day, defeated all his meaſures. Varro, on the day of his command, marched the army ſo cloſe to the enemy, that it was impoſſible to retire without fighting. This imprudent ſtep brought on the famous battle of Cannæ, where Hannibal, whoſe whole force ſcarce equalled the moiety of the

dictatorial office.——Nor did their enmity to Fabius ſubſide 'till after the fatal defeat at Cannæ. For the worthleſs Varro obtained not only the Conſulſhip, but, what is ſtill more extraordinary, even the confidence of the greater part of the Senate, and almoſt the whole army by railing at Fabius and Fabian meaſures, and out-boaſting Minucius. I have ſhewed above from Polybius what truſt the majority of the Senate repoſed in Varro. But I cannot omit a remarkable inſtance, which Livy gives us, of the abſurd and fatal partiality of the military men to Varro, in oppoſition to Æmilius, who avowedly followed the advice of Fabius.——In a council of war, ſays that hiſtorian, held a little before the battle of Cannæ, when each Conſul perſiſted firmly in his former opinion; Æmilius adhering to Fabius's plan for avoiding fighting, Varro to his reſolution of engaging the enemy immediately; Servilius, one of the Conſuls of the former year, was the only one who joined Æmilius, the reſt declared for Varro.

Romans,

Romans, gave them the moſt remarkable defeat we ever read of in their hiſtory. Polybius, and after him the reſt of the hiſtorians, impute this defeat to the great ſuperiority of the Carthaginian army in horſe, and the ignorance of Varro in pitching upon a plain open country for the field of battle, where Hannibal could employ his cavalry to the beſt advantage. That the Carthaginian horſe was ſuperior to the Roman in goodneſs, is readily admitted. But if we compute the number of the cavalry of the Romans, and that of their allies, as given us by Polybius himſelf, we ſhall find the difference in each army amounted but to four thouſand; ſo ſmall an advantage therefore, in point of number, could never poſſibly have turned the ſcale in favour of Hannibal when the Romans had ſuch prodigious odds in the number of their infantry, who ſhewed themſelves no way inferior to Hannibal's foot, either in bravery or intrepidity. The true reaſon was, the infinite ſuperiority of Hannibal in point of Generalſhip. That conſummate leader, by a moſt exquiſite diſpoſition of his troops, a *manœuvre* much too fine for the eyes of the Roman Generals, caught their whole infantry fairly in a trap (though in a plain level country) where they were almoſt to a man cut to pieces, or taken. Æmilius, and all the other general officers,

with [1] 70,000 Romans, lay dead upon the field of battle after a brave and obſtinate reſiſtance. The infamous Varro, that baſe-[2] minded fellow, as Polybius terms him, who commanded the cavalry of the allies on the left wing, behaved like a true bully in the face of danger. He fled almoſt at the firſt attack, and rather choſe to live with infamy than die with honour. When the fatal news reached the city of Rome, both Senate and people gave up all hopes of ſafety. Fabius alone took the lead, and acted with his uſual firmneſs and calmneſs upon this occaſion. He placed guards at the gates to prevent the deſertion of the citizens, who were flying in great numbers to eſcape the conquerors, whom they expected every moment. He confined the women to their houſes, who had filled the city with lamentations. He manned the walls and outworks, and took every other precaution which the ſhortneſs of the time would admit of. All reſigned themſelves implicitly to his conduct, and he acted for the time as ſole Governor. Many of the Senators, and principal of the Roman nobility, were in actual conſultation about leaving Italy, and retiring elſewhere for ſafety. But they were prevented, as Livy [3] in-

[1] Above 80,000, according to Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus.

[2] Polyb. lib. [illegible] [3] Liv. lib. 22, p. 242.

forms

forms us, by the terrible threats of young Scipio, and compelled to ſtay and ſhare the fate of their country. Hannibal has been greatly cenſured for not attacking Rome itſelf immediately after the battle, and is accuſed of not knowing how to make the proper uſe of a victory, though he knew ſo well how to conquer. The candid Monteſquieu acquits him of this charge. His reaſons are, that though Rome at that time was in the higheſt degree of conſternation, yet the effects of fear upon a warlike people, inured to arms like the Romans, and a low undiſciplined rabble, who are ſtrangers to the uſe of arms, are very different. In the former, who are conſcious of their own ſtrength, it almoſt always changes into the moſt deſperate courage. In the latter, who feel their own weakneſs too ſenſibly, it diſpirits ſo much as to render them incapable of reſiſtance. Hence he gives it as his real opinion, that Hannibal would have failed of ſucceſs if he had undertaken the ſiege of that city. His proof is, becauſe the Romans at that very time were able to ſend ſufficient ſuccours, drawn from their own citizens, to every part where they were then wanted. Thus Rome was ſaved, not by the wiſdom or firmneſs of the Senate, but the prudence and magnanimity of one old officer, whom they deſpiſed and hated, and the intrepidity of a boy of eighteen, joined, as I obſerved

before from Dionyſius, to the force of that part of their inſtitution, which formed the whole body of their citizens into a militia, ever ready, and capable of taking the field as ſoldiers. All the Roman armies which were oppoſed to Hannibal, were drawn out of this militia. Nor do we meet with one inſtance of cowardice, or ill-behaviour amongſt the men, but rather of intrepidity even to raſhneſs, which uſed to be the characteriſtick of the Britiſh Nation. Polybius, who was at leaſt as able a judge of the military as any man of that age, and who lived very near the time of the Hannibalick war (as he terms it) is loud in his praiſes of the [1] Roman troops, whoſe infantry he prefers greatly to the Carthaginian mercenaries. Nor does he once impute any of their defeats to the fault of their men, but invariably to the folly and incapacity of their commanders.

Upon the whole, the great defect in the Carthaginian military inſtitution conſiſted in the want of a national militia, which, as Polybius obſerves, was the reaſon of their employing foreign mercenaries. The capital defects in the Roman lay in that equality of power with which each Conſul was veſted in the field, and the ſhort duration of their command, as their office was only annual. Every battle which the Romans loſt to Han-

[1] Polyb. lib. 6. p. 688.

nibal,

nibal, except the firſt, may be fairly aſcribed to the former of theſe cauſes. The defeats of Trebia and Thraſymene were plainly occaſioned by the jealouſy of one of the Conſuls, leſt the other ſhould ſhare with him in the glory of beating Hannibal; as the want of harmony, and difference of opinion between the two Conſuls, was the primary cauſe of the dreadful defeat at Cannæ. To the latter cauſe we may juſtly attribute the long duration of the Hannibalick war; when that great man, who entered Italy with no more than 20,000 foot and 6000 horſe, maintained his ground above ſixteen years, without any aſſiſtance from Carthage, againſt the whole united force and efforts of the Romans, by the mere ſtrength of his own extraordinary genius. For as every man, who had intereſt ſufficient to obtain the Conſulſhip, was immediately veſted with the command of an army, however qualified or not, ſo he was obliged to reſign his command at the end of the year, before he had well time to be thoroughly acquainted with the true method of dealing with his enemy. Thus every new ſucceſſive commander amongſt the Romans, had the ſame taſk to begin afreſh at the opening of every campaign. I know that political writers aſcribe this miſtaken policy to that jealouſy, and fear of lodging ſo much power in ſo few

hands for any length of time, which is ſo natural to all Republican Governments; and that the office of Dictator was contrived as a remedy againſt any abuſe, or inconveniency, which might at any time ariſe from the conſular power: but the event ſhewed, that the remedy was much worſe than the diſeaſe. Whilſt publick virtue exiſted, the office of Dictator was frequently uſeful; but when luxury had introduced corruption, the *pro tempore* Dictator ſoon came to be perpetual, and the perpetual Dictator terminated in a perpetual and deſpotick Emperor.

At Carthage their military inſtitution was entirely different. The power of their Generals in the field was abſolute and unlimited, and, if their conduct was approved of, generally continued to the end of whatever war they were engaged in. They had no occaſion for the dangerous reſource of a Dictator. The watchful eye of their ſtanding court-martial, the committee of 104 of their ableſt Senators, was a perpetual and never-failing check upon the ambition, or ill behaviour of their [1] Generals. The Sacred Co-

[1] Our method of trying delinquents, either in the land or ſea-ſervice, by a court-martial compoſed of their reſpective officers, has been judged liable to many objections, and has occaſioned no little diſcontent in the Nation. For as their enquiry is reſtricted to a particular ſet of articles in each ſervice, I don't ſee how a com-

Cohort, amongſt the Carthaginians, conſiſted of a large body of volunteers of the richeſt and

commanding officer, veſted with a diſcretionary power of acting, can ſtrictly or properly come under their cognizance, or be ever liable to their cenſure, unleſs he is proved guilty of a direct breach of any one of thoſe articles. But as a commander in chief may eaſily avoid an offence of that nature, and yet, upon the whole of his conduct in any expedition, be highly culpable; a court-martial, thus circumſcribed in their power of enquiry, can never be competent judges in a cauſe where they are denied a proper power of examining into the real demerits of the ſuppoſed offender. Much has been ſaid about trying offences of this nature, like other criminal caſes, by juries: a ſcheme which, at the very firſt ſight, muſt appear abſurd and impracticable to the rational and unprejudiced.

As therefore inſtruction is the true end and uſe of all hiſtory, I ſhall take the liberty of offering a ſcheme, drawn from that wiſe and ſalutary inſtitution of the Carthaginians, which is, — "That a ſelect ſtanding committee be appointed, to be compoſed of an equal number of members of both houſes, choſen annually by balloting, with a full power of enquiring into the conduct of all commanders in chief, without any reſtraint of articles of war; and that, after a proper examination, the committee ſhall refer the caſe, with their opinion upon it, to the deciſion of his Majeſty."

This ſcheme ſeems to me the leaſt liable to objections of any I have yet met with. For if the numbers are choſen by balloting, they will be leſs liable to the influence of party. If they are choſen annually, and refer the caſe to the deciſion of the crown, which is the fountain of juſtice as well as mercy, they will neither encroach upon the royal prerogative, nor be liable to that

and greateſt families of the Nation. This wiſe and noble inſtitution was one of the chief ſupports of the Carthaginian State; and as it was the conſtant ſeminary of their officers and commanders, might very probably be one cauſe why luxury and effeminacy could never obtain footing in that warlike Republick. [1] For we always find this generous body giving the moſt ſignal inſtances of bravery and conduct, and bearing down all before them.——Nor did they ever quit the field of battle, 'till they were deſerted by the reſt of the army, and even then generally retired in excellent order.

The Romans were gradually trained up, from the very infancy of their Republick, in long and obſtinate wars with their Italian neighbours, who were maſters of the ſame arms and diſcipline, and were no way their inferiors in bravery. Nor did they perfect themſelves in the art of war, 'till they learned it by bloody experience from Pyrrhus, the moſt conſummate Captain of that age. The Carthaginians were only exerciſed in war with the wild undiſciplined Africans, or the irregular Spaniards; nor were they able with their numerous fleets and prodigious armies

that ſignal defect in the Carthaginian committee, which ſat for life, and whoſe ſentence was final without appeal.

[1] Diodor. Sicul. lib. 20. p. 739.

to

to compleat the reduction of that part of Sicily, which was inhabited by Grecian colonies, who retained their native arms and diſcipline. Hence aroſe the great ſuperiority of the Romans, both in ſoldiers and commanders; though the Barcan family produced ſome great officers, who at leaſt equalled the ableſt Generals Rome could ever boaſt of.

It is evident from the courſe of this enquiry, that the ruin of the Roman Republick aroſe wholly from internal cauſes. The ruin of Carthage was owing remotely to internal, but immediately to external. The Plebeian faction reduced Rome to the verge of ruin at the battle of Cannæ, and a complication of factions compleated the ſubverſion of that Republick under the two Triumvirates. The envy and jealouſy of the Hannonian faction deprived Carthage of all the fruits of Hannibal's amazing victories and progreſs, and paved the way for the utter exciſion of their very name and nation by the Roman arms. Such are the direful effects of faction, when ſuffered to run its natural lengths without controul, in the moſt flouriſhing and beſt conſtituted Government!—

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of Revolutions in mixed Governments.

POLYBIUS [1] remarks, that the beſt form of Government is that which is compoſed of a due admixture of monarchy, ariſtocracy and democracy. He affirms that his aſſertion may not only be proved from reaſon, but from the evidence of fact, and cites the Spartan conſtitution in proof, which was modelled upon that very plan by Lycurgus. He adds too, [2] that to perpetuate the duration of his Government, he united the peculiar excellencies of all the beſt Governments in one form, that neither of the three parts, by ſwelling beyond its juſt bounds, might ever be able to deviate into its original inborn defects: but that whilſt each power was mutually drawn back by the oppoſite attraction of the other two, neither power might ever preponderate, but the balance of Government continue ſuſpended in its true æquipoiſe.

From the obſervance of this nice adjuſtment of the balance of Government, he

[1] Polyb. Hiſt. lib. 6. p. 628.
[2] Id. ibid. p. 638—9.

foretels

foretels the duration or fall of all mixed Governments in general. He adds, that as all Government ariſes originally from the people; ſo all mutations in Government proceed primarily from the people alſo. For when once a ſtate has ſtruggled through many and great difficulties, and emerged at laſt to freedom and wealth, men begin to ſink gradually into luxury, and to grow more diſſolute in their morals. The ſeeds of ambition will ſpring up, and prompt them to be more fond of contending for ſuperiority in the magiſtracy, and carrying their point, in whatever they had ſet their hearts upon, than is conſiſtent with the welfare of the community: when once theſe evils are got to a head in a country ſo circumſtanced, the change muſt neceſſarily be for the worſe; becauſe the principle of ſuch change will ariſe from the gratification, or diſappointment of the ambition of the chief citizens, with reſpect to honours and preferments; and from that inſolence and luxury ariſing from wealth, by which the morals of the private people will be totally corrupted. Thus the change in Government will be primarily effected by the people. For when the people are galled by the rapine and oppreſſion of thoſe in power, ariſing from a principle of avarice; and corrupted, and elated with an undue opinion of their own weight, by

by the flatteries of the diſappointed, which proceed from a principle of ambition, they raiſe thoſe furious commotions in the State, which unhinge all Government. Theſe commotions firſt reduce it to a State of anarchy, which at laſt terminates in abſolute monarchy and tyranny.

I have here given the ſentiments of Polybius (and almoſt in his own words) from that excellent diſſertation in Government, preſerved to us in the ſixth book of his hiſtory, which I would recommend to the peruſal of my countrymen. He there traces Government up to its firſt origin. He explains the principles, by which different Governments aroſe to the ſummit of their power and grandeur, and proves, that they ſunk to ruin by a more or leſs rapid progreſs, in proportion as they receded more or leſs from the firſt principles, on which they were originally founded. He ſurvived the ruin of all the Grecian Republicks, as well as Carthage, and lived (as he more than once tells us) to ſee the Romans maſters of the known world. Bleſt with parts and learning ſuperior to moſt men of his time, joined to the moſt ſolid judgment, and the experience of eighty-two years; no man better underſtood the intrinſick nature of Government in general. No man could with more certainty foretel the various mutations, which ſo frequently hap-

happen in different forms of Government, which muſt be ever in a fluctuating ſtate, from the complicated variety of the human paſſions. Nor can any man give us better hints, than he has done, for guarding againſt the effects of thoſe dangerous paſſions, and preſerving the conſtitution of a free people in its full force and vigour. Of all the legiſlators, which he knew of, he prefers Lycurgus, whom he looks upon rather as divinely inſpired, than as a mere man. He eſteems the plan of Government which he eſtabliſhed at Sparta, the moſt perfect, and propoſes it is a general model worthy the imitation of every other community; and he remarks, that the Spartans, by adhering to that plan, preſerved their liberty longer than any other nation of the known world.

I cannot help obſerving upon this occaſion, that our own conſtitution, as ſettled at the Revolution, ſo nearly coincides with Lycurgus's general plan of Government, as laid down by Polybius, where the monarchy was for life and hereditary, that it ſeems, at firſt ſight to have been formed by that very model. For our plan of Government intended to fix and preſerve ſo juſt a proportion of the Monarchick, Ariſtocratick, and Democratick powers, by their Repreſentatives, King, Lords, and Commons; that any two of thoſe powers might be able jointly

ly to give a check to the other, but not to deſtroy it, as the deſtruction of any one power muſt neceſſarily induce a different form of Government. This is the true baſis of the Britiſh conſtitution, the duration of which muſt abſolutely depend upon the juſt equilibrium preſerved between theſe three powers. This conſequently is the unerring teſt, by which every unbiaſſed and attentive conſiderer may judge, whether we are in an improving ſtate, or whether, and by what degrees, we are verging towards ruin. But as I aim at reformation, not ſatire; as I mean no invidious reflections, but only to give my ſentiments with that honeſt freedom, to which every Briton is intitled by birthright; I ſhall juſt ſtate from Polybius, the means by which all mixed Governments have originally deviated from thoſe firſt principles, which were the baſis of their riſe and grandeur: how by this deviation they tended towards their decline, and that thoſe means acquiring additional force from that very decline, neceſſarily produced thoſe evils, which accelerated the deſtruction of every free people. As the remarks of this moſt judicious hiſtorian, are founded upon long experience, drawn from undeniable facts, to many of which he himſelf was eye[1] witneſs, they will

[1] Polyb. lib. 3. p. 223.

not

not only carry greater weight, but will enable us to form a right judgment of our own ſituation, as it is at preſent circumſtanced.

Polybius obſerves, that of all the mixed Governments ever known to him, that of Lycurgus alone was the reſult of cool reaſon and long ſtudy. The form of the Roman Republick, on the contrary, was the production of neceſſity. For the Romans came at the knowledge of the moſt proper remedies for all their political evils, not by dint of reaſoning, but by the deep-felt experience of the many and dangerous calamities, with which they had ſo long and ſo often ſtruggled. I don't in the leaſt doubt, but that excellent form of Government eſtabliſhed by our rude Gothick anceſtors, wherever their arms prevailed, aroſe from the ſame cauſe, neceſſity founded upon experience. Every mixed Government therefore, where the three powers are duly balanced, has a *reſſource* within itſelf againſt all thoſe political evils to which it is liable. By this *reſſource*, I mean, that joint coercive force, which any two of theſe powers are able to exerciſe over the other. But as nothing but neceſſity can authorize the exerciſe of this power, ſo it muſt be ſtrictly regulated by thoſe principles, on which the Government was founded. For if by an undue exerciſe of this power, any one of the three ſhould be diminiſhed, or

annihilated, the balance would be deſtroyed, and the conſtitution alter proportionally for the worſe. Thus in Denmark, where the monarchy was limited and elective, the people, exaſperated by the oppreſſions of the nobility, who had aſſumed an almoſt deſpotick power, out of a principle of revenge threw their whole weight into the regal ſcale. Frederick the IIId, the then reigning monarch, ſtrengthened by this acceſſion of power and the aſſiſtance of the people, compelled the nobility to ſurrender their power and privileges. In conſequence of this fatal ſtep taken by the people, the monarchy, in the year 1660, became abſolute and hereditary. Lord Moleſworth obſerves upon this occaſion, in his Account of Denmark, that the people of Denmark have ſince felt by ſad experience, that the little finger of an abſolute Prince is heavier than the loins of a hundred Nobles.

The late revolution of Government in Sweden, though ariſing from the ſame principles, took a very different turn. Charles the XIIth, brave even to enthuſiaſm, and as inſatiably fond of glory as the ambitious Alexander, had quite tired out and exhauſted his people, by his deſtructive expeditions. But when that fortunate ſhot from the town of Frederickſhal gave repoſe to his own country as well as to a great part of Europe, the

States

States of Sweden, no longer awed by a warlike Monarch, who had uſurped a deſpotick power, and a veteran army, again reſumed the exerciſe of their own inherent powers. Stimulated by a deſire of vengeance for the evils they had already ſuffered, and the fear of ſmarting again under the ſame evils, they beheaded Gortz, the miniſter of their late Monarch's oppreſſion, and left the crown no more than the bare ſhadow of authority. For though they continued the Monarchy for life and hereditary, yet they impoſed ſuch rigid terms upon their ſucceeding Kings, as reduced them to a ſtate of dependance and impotence nearly equal to a Doge of Genoa or Venice. We ſee, in both theſe inſtances, the revolution in Government effected by the union of two powers of the Government againſt the third. The cataſtrophe indeed in both nations was different, becauſe that third power, which was obnoxious to the other two, was different in each nation. In the former of theſe inſtances, the people, fired with reſentment againſt the nobility, and inſtigated by ſecret emiſſaries of the crown, blindly gave up their whole power to the King, which enabled him to deprive the nobility (the ſecond eſtate) of their ſhare of power, and bring the whole to center in the crown. Thus the Government in Denmark was changed into abſolute Monarchy. In

the latter, the Senate took the lead during the *interregnum*, which followed the death of Charles, and changed the Government into Ariſtocracy. For though the outward form of Government indeed is preſerved, yet the eſſence no longer remains. The Monarchy is merely titular, but the whole power is abſorbed by the Senate, conſequently the Government is ſtrictly Ariſtocratick. For the people were by no means gainers by the change, but remain in the ſame ſtate of ſervitude, which they ſo much complained of before. Thus in all revolutions in mixed Governments, where the union of the two injured powers is animated by the ſpirit of Patriotiſm, and directed by that ſalutary rule before laid down, which forbids us to deſtroy, and only enjoins us to reduce the third offending power within its proper bounds, the balance of Government will be reſtored upon its firſt principles, and the change will be for the better. Thus when the arbitrary and inſupportable encroachments of the crown under James the IId, aimed ſo viſibly at the ſubverſion of our conſtitution, and the introduction of abſolute Monarchy; neceſſity authorized the Lords and Commons (the other two powers) to have *recourſe* to the joint exerciſe of that reſtraining power, which is the inherent *reſſource* of all mixed Governments. But as the exerciſe of this power

was

was conducted by Patriotiſm, and regulated by the above-mentioned rule, the event was the late happy Revolution; by which the power of the crown was reſtrained within its proper limits, and the Government reſettled upon its true baſis, as nearly as the genius of the times would admit of. But if the paſſions prevail, and ambition lurks beneath the maſque of Patriotiſm, the change will inevitably be for the worſe. Becauſe the reſtitution of the balance of Government, which alone can authorize the exerciſe of the two joint powers againſt the third, will be only the pretext, whilſt the whole weight and fury of the incenſed ple will be directed ſolely to the ends of ambition. Thus if the regal power ſhould be enabled to take the lead by gaining over the whole weight of the people, the change will terminate in abſolute Monarchy; which ſo lately happened in Denmark, as it had happened before in almoſt all the old Gothick Governments. If the Ariſtocratick power, actuated by that ambition, which, an extreme few inſtances excepted, ſeems inſeparable from the regal, ſhould be able to direct the joint force of the people againſt the Crown, the change will be to an Ariſtocratick Government, like the preſent State of Sweden, or the Government of Holland, from the death of William the IIId, to the late

revolution in favour of the Stadtholder. If the power of the people impelled to action by any cauſe, either real or imaginary, ſhould be able to ſubvert the other two, the conſequence will be, that Anarchy, which Polybius terms, the [1] ſerine and ſavage dominion of the people. This will continue 'till ſome able and daring ſpirit, whoſe low birth or fortune precluded him from riſing to the chief dignities of the ſtate by any other means, puts himſelf at the head of the populace enured to live by plunder and rapine, and drawing the whole power to himſelf, erects a Tyranny upon the ruins of the former Government; or 'till the community, tired out and impatient under their diſtracted ſituation, bring back the Government into its own channel. This is what Polybius terms the [2] circumvolution of Governments; or the rotation of Governments within themſelves 'till they return to the ſame point. The fate of the Grecian and Roman Republicks terminated in the former of theſe events. The diſtracted ſtate of Government in this nation from 1648, to the reſtoration of Charles the IId, ended happily in the latter, though the nation for

[1] Δημοκρατία θηρίώδης. Polyb. p. 638.

[2] Πολιτειῶν ἀνακύκλωσις. p. 637.

ſome

ſome years experienced the former of theſe cataſtrophes under the Government of Cromwell.

I have here given a ſhort, but plain general analyſis of Government, founded upon experience drawn from hiſtorical truths, and adapted to the general capacity of my countrymen. But if any one deſires to be acquainted with the Philoſophy of Government, and to inveſtigate the ratio and ſeries of all theſe mutations, or revolutions of Governments within themſelves, I muſt, with Polybius, refer him to Plato's Republick.

The plan of a good and happy Government, which Plato lays down, by the mouth of Socrates, in the former part of that work, is wholly ideal, and impoſſible to be executed, unleſs mankind could be new moulded. But the various revolutions of government, deſcribed above, which he treats of in the latter part, was founded upon facts, facts which he himſelf had been eye-witneſs to in the numerous Republicks of Greece and Sicily, and had fatally experienced in his own country Athens. The divine Philoſopher, in that part of his admirable treatiſe, traces all theſe mutations up to their firſt ſource, " The intemperance of the human paſſions," and accounts for their various progreſs, effects and conſequences, from the various combinations of the ſame perpetually

conflicting paſſions. His maxims are founded ſolely upon the ſublimeſt truths, his alluſions beautiful and appoſite, and his inſtructions alike applicable to publick or private life, equally capable of forming the ſtateſman or the man.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

XEnophon obſerves, that if the Athenians, together with the ſovereignty of the ſeas, had enjoyed the advantageous ſituation of an iſland, they might with great eaſe have given law to their neighbours. For the ſame fleets which enabled them to ravage the ſea-coaſts of the continent at diſcretion, could equally have protected their own country from the inſults of their enemies as long as they maintained their naval ſuperiority. One would imagine, ſays the great [2] Monteſquieu, that Xenophon in this paſſage was ſpeaking of the iſland of Britain. The judicious and glorious exertion of our naval force under the preſent miniſtry * ſo ſtrongly confirms Xenophon's remark, that one would imagine their meaſures were directed, as well as dictated by his conſummate genius. We are maſters both of thoſe natural and acquired advantages, which Xenophon required to make his countrymen invincible. We daily feel their importance more and more, and muſt be ſenſible that

[1] Xenophon. de Republ. Athen.

[2] Eſprit des Loix, vol. 2. p. 3.

* The firſt edition of this Work appeared in 1759.

our

our liberty, our happineſs, and our very exiſtence as a people, depend upon our naval ſuperiority, ſupported by our military virtue and publick ſpirit. Nothing, humanly ſpeaking, but luxury, effeminacy and corruption can ever deprive us of this envied ſuperiority. What an accumulated load of guilt therefore muſt lye upon any future adminiſtration, who, to ſerve the ends of faction, ſhould ever precipitate Britain from her preſent height down to the abject ſtate of Athens, by encouraging theſe evils to blaſt all publick virtue in their unlimited progreſs.

As Britain is ſo confeſſedly ſuperior to all the maritime powers of the antients by the advantages of ſituation; ſo the Britiſh conſtitution, as ſettled at the Revolution, is demonſtrably far preferable to, and better formed for duration, than any of the moſt celebrated Republicks of antiquity. As the executive power is veſted in a ſingle perſon, who is deemed the firſt branch in the legiſlature; and as that power is for life and hereditary; our conſtitution is neither liable to thoſe frequent convulſions, which attended the annual elections of Conſuls, nor to that ſoleciſm in politicks, two ſupreme heads of one body for life, and hereditary, which was the great defect in the Spartan inſtitution. As the Houſe of Commons, elected by, and out of the body of the people, is veſted

veſted with all the power annexed to the Tribunitial office amongſt the Romans; the people enjoy every advantage which ever accrued to the Roman people by that inſtitution, whilſt the nation is ſecure from all thoſe calamitous ſeditions, in which every factious Tribune could involve his country at pleaſure. And as all our queſtions in parliament are decided by a majority of voices; we can never be ſubject to that capital defect in the Carthaginian conſtitution, where the ſingle *Veto* of one diſcontented ſenator referred the deciſion of the moſt important affair to a wrong-headed, ungovernable populace. The Houſe of Peers is placed in the middle of the balance, to prevent the Regal ſcale from preponderating to Deſpotiſm or Tyranny; or the Democratical to Anarchy and its conſequences. The equitable intent of our laws is plainly calculated, like thoſe of Solon, to preſerve the liberty and property of every individual in the community; and to reſtrain alike the richeſt or the pooreſt, the greateſt or the meaneſt, from doing or ſuffering wrong from each other. This is the wiſe and ſalutary plan of power eſtabliſhed at the Revolution. Would we always adhere ſteadily to this plan, and preſerve the juſt æquilibrium, as delivered down to us by our great Anceſtors, our conſtitution would remain

remain firm and unſhaken to the end of time.

I have already ſhewed in the courſe of theſe papers, that, ſince that ever memorable æra, we ſuffered ſome breaches to be made in the moſt intereſting part of this conſtitution, not by the hand of open violence, but by the inſidious, and conſequeutly more dangerous arts of corruption. The great increaſe of our commerce after the peace of Utrecht, brought in a vaſt acceſſion of wealth; and that wealth revived, and gradually diffuſed that luxury through the whole nation, which had lain dormant during the dangerous reign of James the IId, and the warlike reigns of William and Ann. To this univerſal luxury, and this only, we muſt impute that amazing progreſs of corruption, which ſeized the very vitals of our conſtitution. If therefore we impartially compare the preſent ſtate of our own country with that of Rome and Carthage, we ſhall find, that we reſemble them moſt when in their declining period.

To the commercial maxims of the Carthaginians, we have added their inſatiable luſt of gain, without their œconomy, and contempt of luxury and effeminacy. To the luxury and diſſipation of the Romans, we have joined their venality, without their military

military ſpirit: and we feel the pernicious effects of the ſame ſpecies of faction, which was the great leading cauſe to ruin in both thoſe Republicks. The Roman inſtitution was formed to make and to preſerve their conqueſts. Abroad invincible, at home invulnerable, they poſſeſſed all the reſources requiſite for a warlike nation within themſelves. The military ſpirit of their people, where every citizen was a ſoldier, furniſhed inexhauſtible ſupplies for their armies abroad, and ſecured them at home from all attempts of invaſion. The Carthaginian was better calculated to acquire than to preſerve. They depended upon commerce for the acquiſition of wealth, and upon their wealth for the protection of their commerce. They owed their conqueſts to the venal blood and ſinews of other people, and, like their anceſtors the Phœnicians, exhibited their money bags as ſymbols of their power. They truſted too much to the valour of foreigners, and too little to that of their own natives. Thus whilſt they were formidable abroad by their fleets and mercenary armies, they were weak and defenceleſs at home. But the event ſhewed, how dangerous it is for the greateſt commercial nation to rely on this kind of mercantile policy; and that a nation of unarmed undiſciplined traders can never be a match, whilſt they are ſo circumſtanced, for a na-

a nation of ſoldiers. About two centuries ago a handful (comparatively ſpeaking) of rude irregular Tartars ſubdued, and ſtill enjoy the dominion of China, the moſt populous, and the richeſt commercial Empire in the univerſe. And a neighbouring mercantile Republick, by adhering too cloſely to theſe maxims, is at this time neither reſpected by her friends, nor feared by her enemies.

The Engliſh conſtitution was originally military, like that of every kingdom founded by our Gothick anceſtors. Henry the VIIth gave the firſt ſpur to commerce, by diffuſing property more equally amongſt the commons at the expence of the nobility. From that time, the ancient military ſpirit of this nation has gradually dwindled to the low ebb, at which we now find it. But the great epocha of our marine, as well as commerce, ought properly to be fixed to the glorious reign of Elizabeth. The colonies ſettled during the peaceful reign of James the Iſt, laid the foundation of our preſent extenſive commerce. The civil wars between Charles the Iſt and the parliament revived and diffuſed the ancient military ſpirit thro' the whole body of the people; and the able Cromwell made the Engliſh name more reſpectable in Europe, than it ever had been under any of our Monarchs. Our naval glory

glory ſeems to have reached its ſummit under that period; for though our marine is greatly encreaſed both in the number and ſtrength of our ſhipping, yet we have by no means ſurpaſſed the commanders and ſeamen of that time either in bravery or ability. The reaſon is evident. Publick virtue then exiſted in its full force, and zeal for the national glory was the great ſpur to action. The commanders ſailed in queſt of honour, not lucre, and eſteemed the glory of the capture as an adequate reward for the moſt hazardous enterprizes. Luxury was as much unknown to the higheſt claſs, as ſpirituous liquors were to the loweſt. Diſcipline, ſobriety, and an awful ſenſe of religion, were ſtrictly kept up amongſt the private ſeamen; whilſt the humane uſage of the officers taught them to obey from love, and a juſt ſenſe of their duty, not from the ſlaviſh principle of fear only. The immortal Blake eſteemed 500 l. for a ring, and the publick thanks of parliament, a glorious recompence for all thoſe illuſtrious actions, which made Africa and Europe tremble, and raiſed the Engliſh flag to the ſummit of glory. Inferior merit, in later times, has been rewarded with coronets and great lucrative employments.

Luxury with its fatal effects was imported by Charles the IId at the Reſtoration. The con-

contagious influence of that bane to publick virtue and liberty, corrupted our manners, enervated our bodies, and debaſed our minds, whilſt our military ſpirit ſubſided, in proportion as the love of pleaſure increaſed. Charles the IId, nurtured in the high principles of prerogative, was diffident of a militia compoſed of the whole body of the people. He obtained a ſtanding force of about 4 or 5000 men under the ſpecious denomination of guards and garriſons; which he increaſed afterwards to 8000, and ſuffered the Militia gradually to decay, 'till it became almoſt uſeleſs. A policy fatal to liberty, which has been too ſucceſsfully copied, ſince that reign, by every iniquitous miniſter, who ſupported himſelf by faction. James the IId, devoted to bigotry, and iufluenced by the moſt weak, as well as the moſt wicked counſels, that ever prevailed in this kingdom, at one ſtroke diſarmed the people, and eſtabliſhed a large ſtanding army. As the militia were unwilling to act againſt Monmouth and his followers, whom they looked upon as the protector of their religion and liberties, James, concealing the true reaſon, declared to his Parliament, that he had found the Militia uſeleſs and unſerviceable by experience, and inſiſted upon ſuch ſupplies, as would enable him to ſupport thoſe additional troops, which he ſhould find neceſſary for his ſecurity. And he had actually increaſed

creaſed his army to 30,000 men at the time of the Revolution. The whole reigns of William the Third and Ann are diſtinguiſhed by war abroad and factions at home. Yet though we entered into both thoſe wars as principals, the military ſpirit of our people was not much improved; our national troops compoſed but a ſmall part of the allied armies, and we placed our chief dependance upon foreign mercenaries.

Frequent attempts have been made ſince that time to revive a national diſciplined Militia, which have been as conſtantly defeated by corruption and the malignity of faction. Our late fears of an invaſion, and the introduction of ſo large a body of foreign troops, a meaſure highly unpopular and diſtaſteful, procured at laſt the long wiſhed-for act for a Militia. Mutilated as it was, and clogged with almoſt inſuperable difficulties by the ſame faction, who durſt not openly oppoſe it at that dangerous juncture, the real well-wiſhers to their country were glad to accept it. They looked upon it as a foundation laid for a much more uſeful and extenſive Militia; which time and opportunity might enable them to perfect. Much has been ſaid, and many aſſertions boldly thrown out of the utter impracticability of a national Militia. But this is either the language of corruption or of effeminacy and cowardice. The Ro-

mans, in the firſt Punick war, found themſelves unable to contend with the Carthaginians for want of a marine. Yet that magnanimous people, without any other knowledge of the mechaniſm of a ſhip, than what they acquired from a galley of their enemies, thrown by accident upon their coaſts, without either ſhipwright or ſeaman, built, manned, and fitted out a fleet under the Conſul Duilius in three months time, which engaged and totally defeated the grand fleet of Carthage, though that Republick had enjoyed the ſovereignty of the ſea unrivalled for time immemorial. This effort of the Roman magnanimity gives a higher idea of the Roman genius, than any other action recorded in their hiſtory. And by this alone we muſt be convinced, "That nothing is "inſurmountable to the unconquerable hand "of liberty, when backed by publick virtue, "and the generous reſolution of a brave and "willing people." The difficulties and obſtacles in either caſe, I mean of making a fleet or eſtabliſhing a good militia, will admit of no compariſon. The Romans may almoſt be ſaid to have created a fleet out of nothing. We have nothing more to do than to rouze and diffuſe that martial ſpirit through the nation, which the arts of miniſterial policy have ſo long endeavoured to keep dormant. Great indeed has been the outcry of the danger of truſting

truſting arms in the diſſolute hands of the ſcum and refuſe of the nation in theſe licentious times. Theſe I conſign to the proper ſeverity of the martial diſcipline of an army; for of this kind of people, the bulk of every army in Europe is at this time compoſed. I ſpeak to the nobility and gentry, the traders and yeomanry of this kingdom, to all thoſe who are poſſeſſed of property, and have ſomething to loſe, and, from the intereſt of their reſpective ſhares, are equally concerned in the preſervation of the whole. Of ſuch as theſe the Roman armies were compoſed who conquered Italy. Every Roman ſoldier was a citizen poſſeſſed of property, and equally intereſted in the ſafety of the Republick. The wiſdom of the Romans in the choice of their ſoldiers never appeared in ſo conſpicuous a light as after the defeat at Cannæ. Every citizen preſſed to take up arms in defence of his country, and not only refuſed his pay, but generouſly gave up what gold and ſilver he was maſter of, even to the moſt trifling ornaments, for the publick ſervice. The behaviour of the women too, to their immortal honour, was equally great and diſintereſted. Such is the ſpirit, which a truly brave and free people will ever exert in a time of diſtreſs and danger. Marius was the firſt man who broke through that wiſe maxim, and raiſed his forces out of the

ſixth claſs, which conſiſted only of the dregs and refuſe of the people. Marius too gave the firſt ſtab to the conſtitution of his country. People of property are not only the chief ſupport, but the beſt and ſafeſt defence of a free and opulent country; and their example will always have a proper influence upon their inferiors.

Nothing but an extenſive Militia can revive the once martial ſpirit of this nation, and we had even better once more be a nation of ſoldiers, like our renowned anceſtors, than a nation of abject crouching ſlaves to the moſt rapacious, and moſt inſolent people in the univerſe. Let us not be too much elated, and lulled into a fatal ſecurity from ſome late ſucceſſes, in which our national forces had no ſhare. Nothing is ſo common as unexpected viciſſitudes in war. Our enemies have many and great reſources; our heroick ally, in caſe of a reverſe of fortune, few or none. Our haughty and implacable enemy, unaccuſtomed to inſults in their own territories, will think the blot in their honour indelible, 'till they have returned the affront upon our coaſts with redoubled vengeance. Whilſt a pretender to this crown exiſts, France will never want a plauſible pretext for invading this kingdom. Their laſt attempt anſwered the propoſed end ſo well, that we may be certain, ſo politick

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an enemy, inſtigated by revenge, will omit no opportunity of playing the ſame ſucceſsful engine once more againſt us. The French are now perfectly well acquainted with our weak ſide. The violent ſhock our national credit received by the inroad of a few Highlanders only, into the heart of this country, has taught them the infallible method of diſtreſſing us in that eſſential point. Should therefore our meaſures for annoying that nation be ever ſo wiſely planned, yet we can never hope to execute them with proportionate vigour, whilſt we remain defenceleſs at home. If the bare alarm only of an invaſion frightened us ſo lately into the expence, as well as ignominy, of importing foreign mercenaries for our own defence, the French know by experience, that an actual attempt would compel us to recall our fleets and forces, and again expoſe our commerce, colonies, and our only ally to their mercy. No man, I believe, is ſo weak as to imagine, that France will be deterred from ſuch an attempt by the danger which may attend it. For if we reflect upon the number of her troops, the riſque of 10 or 20,000 men, can hardly be deemed an object worthy the attention of ſo formidable a power. For ſhould they all periſh in the attempt, yet France would be amply repaid by the advantages ſhe would draw from that confu-

confuſion, which they would neceſſarily occaſion. The traitor who lately pointed out the proper time, as well as place for an invaſion, and the fatal effects it would have upon publick credit, whatever ſucceſs might attend it, furniſhes us with a convincing proof, that France never loſes ſight of ſo uſeful a meaſure. A conſideration which greatly inforces the neceſſity of national union, and a national Militia. The unequalled abilities of one man[1] (humanly ſpeaking) have given a turn to the affairs of Germany, as happy, as it was amazing; and hope begins to dawn upon our late deſpairing nation. The wiſe and vigorous meaſures of our preſent Patriot-miniſtry have conciliated not only the eſteem, but the univerſal confidence of the people. Under the preſent miniſtry we laid the foundation of this long wiſhed-for, though long deſpaired of, Militia. If we ſupport their adminiſtration with unanimity and vigour, we may fix this great national object, upon that extenſive and uſeful plan, which was deſigned and hoped for by every lover of his country. The fate therefore of the Militia depends abſolutely upon the preſent criſis. For if we ſupinely neglect this auſpicious opportunity, future efforts will be juſt as inneffectual, as the point we

[1] The King of Pruſſia.

have

have already carried with ſo much labour and aſſiduity. For the ſame faction, which has invariably oppoſed every attempt for a national Militia, are avowed enemies to the preſent miniſters, from that antipathy, which private intereſt and the luſt of power for ſelfiſh ends, will ever bear to Patriotiſm and publick virtue. Should therefore the evil genius of this nation again prevail, and the ſame faction once more ſeize the helm of Government, we muſt give up all hopes of a Militia as well as every other national meaſure.

Let us throw but one glance upon the preſent ſituation of theſe once glorious Republicks, and we cannot help reflecting upon the final and direful cataſtrophe, which will eternally reſult from the prevalence of ambitious and ſelfiſh faction ſupported by corruption.

Greece, once the nurſe of arts and ſciences, the fruitful mother of Philoſophers, Lawgivers, and Heroes, now lies proſtrate under the iron yoke of ignorance and barbariſm——Carthage, once the mighty ſovereign of the ocean, and the center of univerſal commerce, which poured the riches of the nations into her lap, now puzzles the inquiſitive traveller, in his reſearches after even the veſtiges of her ruins.—— And Rome, the miſtreſs of the univerſe, which once contained

contained whatever was eſteemed great or brilliant in human nature, is now ſunk into the ignoble ſeat of whatever is eſteemed mean and infamous.

Should faction again predominate and ſucceed in its deſtructive views, and the daſtardly maxims of luxury and effeminacy univerſally prevail amongſt us——Such too will ſoon be the fate of Britain.

PR
MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM

FINIS.